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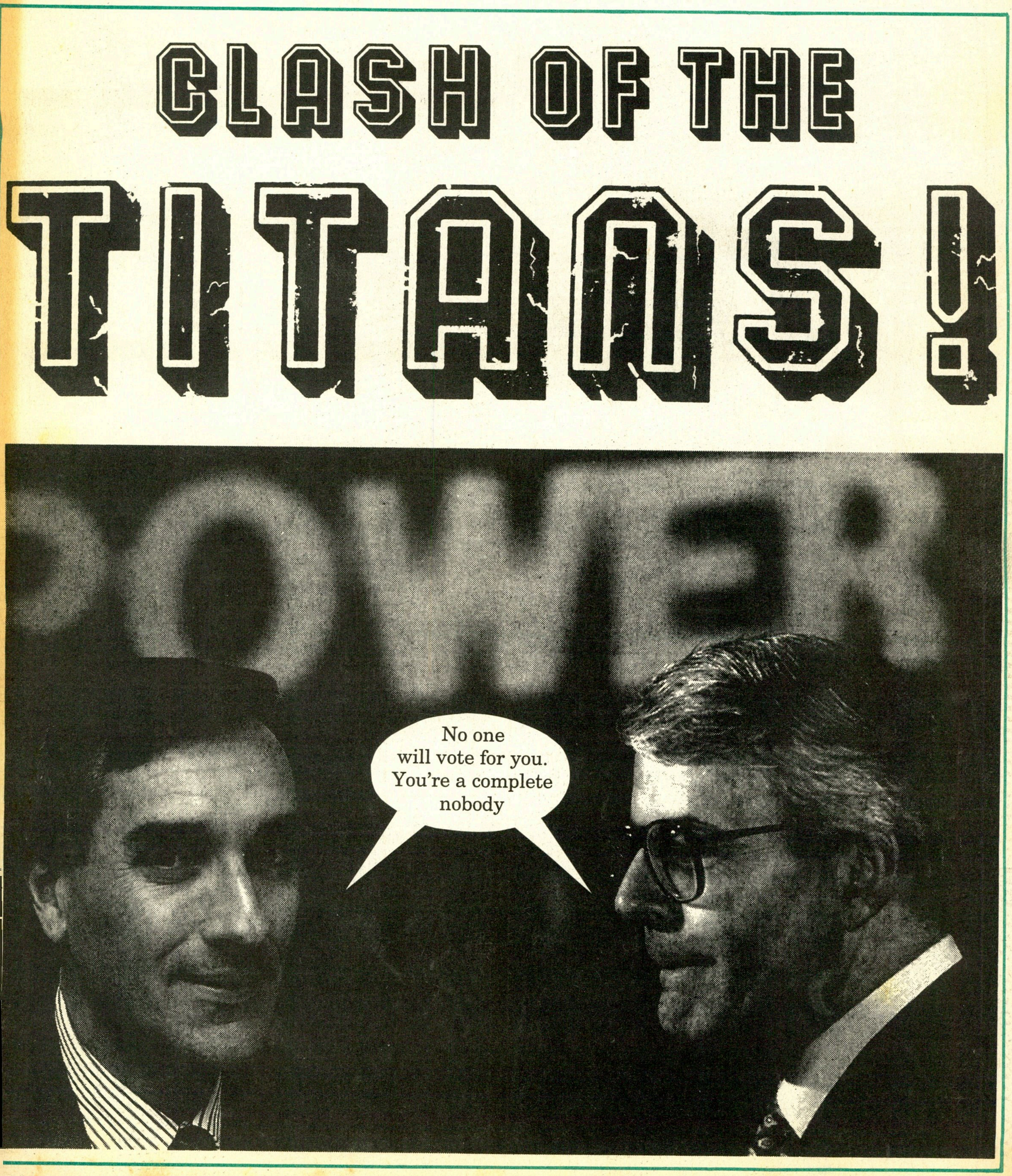

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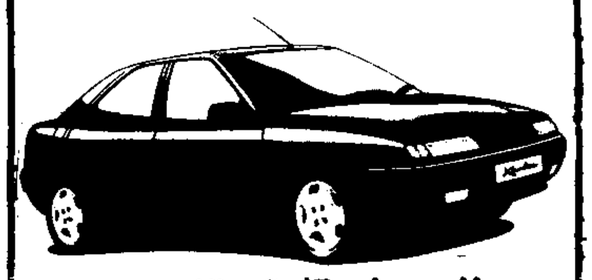

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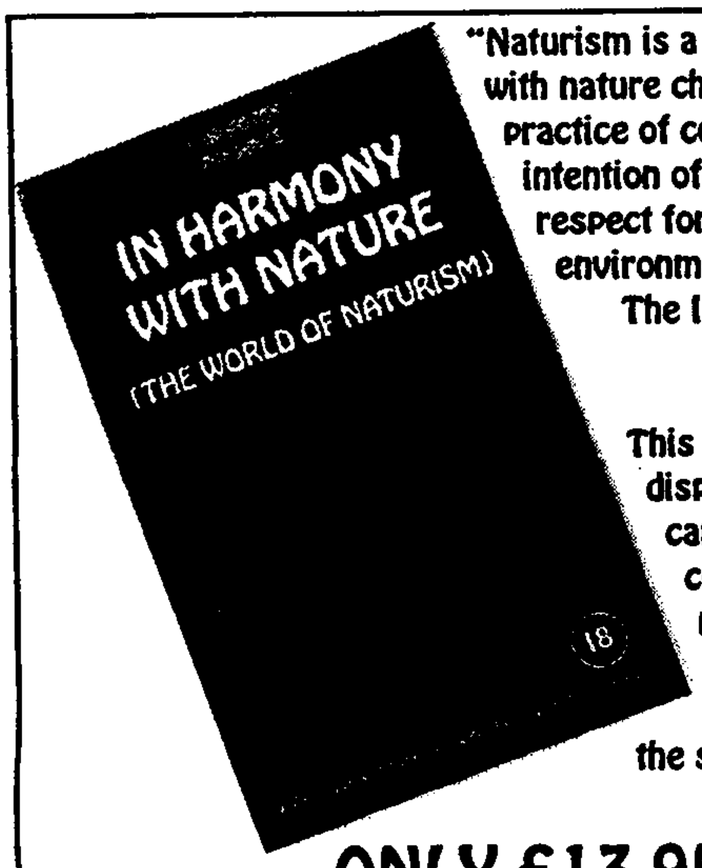

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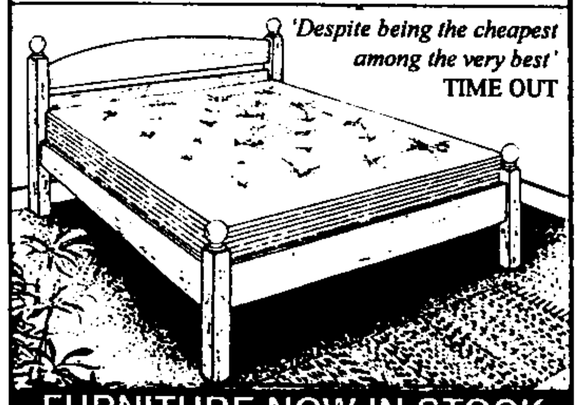

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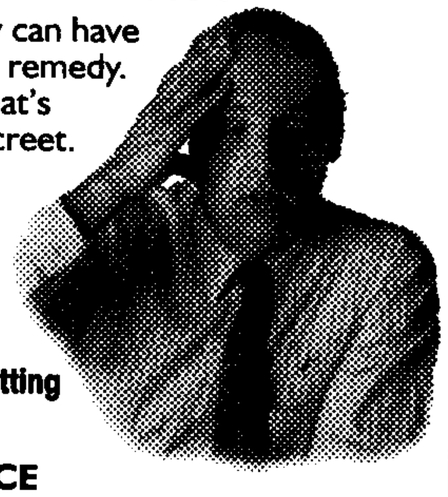

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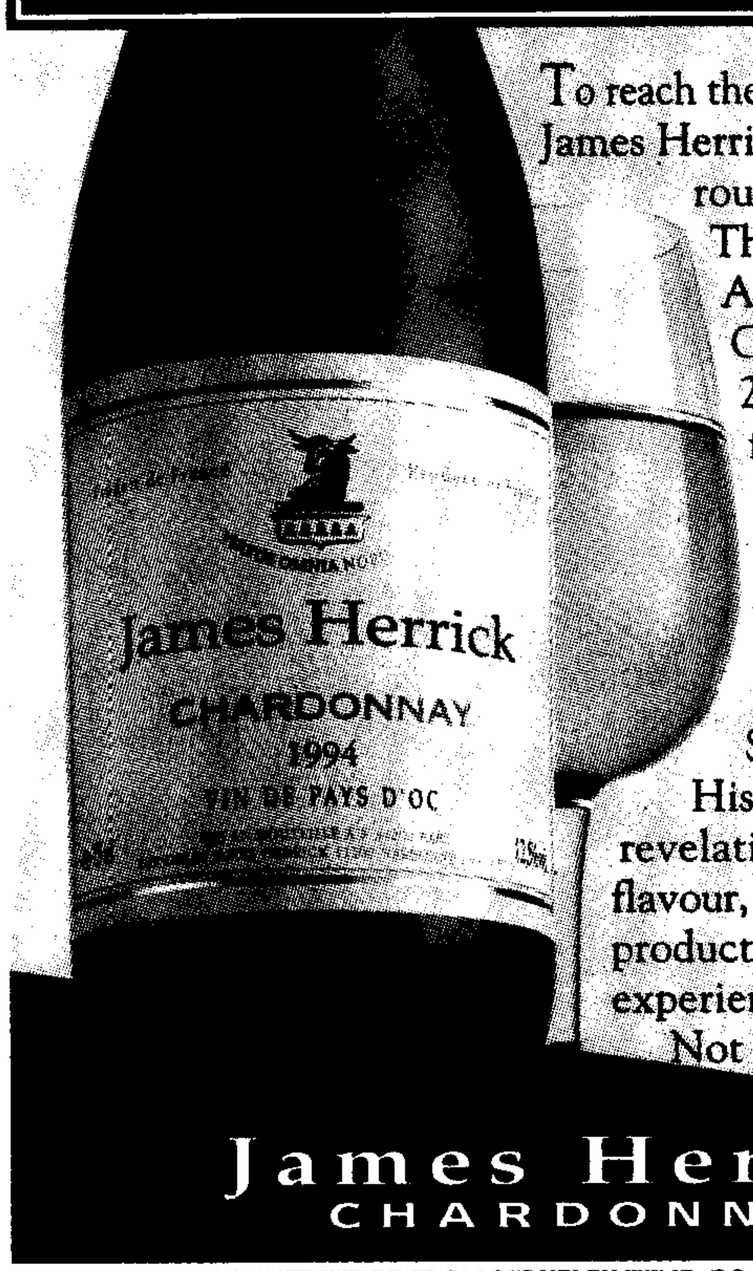

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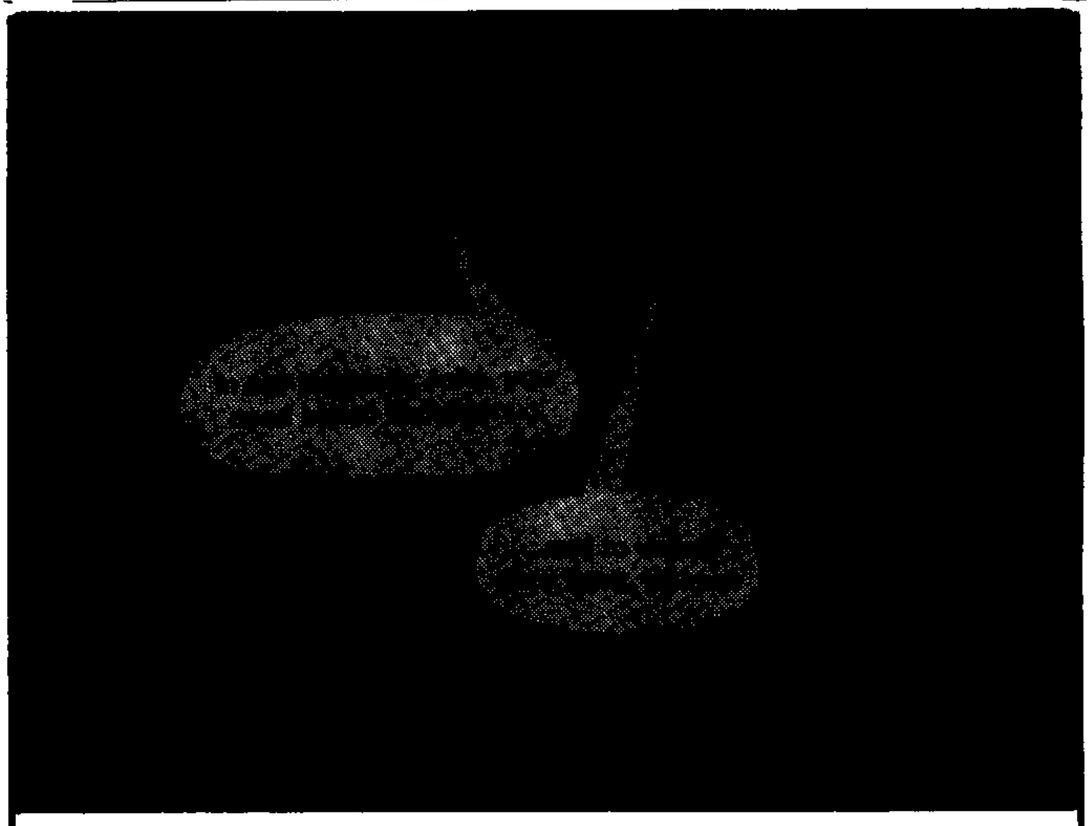

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There is, however, one small proviso to this general ruling and that is contained in Footnote 147 (b) of the Report. This reads:

"Where it can be shown that a senior executive's contribution has been truly outstanding in terms of performance-related productivity then it may be acceptable for his pay to be increased accordingly.

"Such an example might be the work of, say, Lord Gnome on the highly successful Gnomeberry Report who should be entitled to an annual salary increment of 375% plus a cash bonus of £2 million and related share options of not less than £17 million.

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IN THE TEAROOM

DESPITE the foul stink of public debate so far, the leadership contest isn't about Eurocrap at all.

Most Tory MPs couldn't give a shit whether the prime minister rules out a single European currency on principle or merely hints that there won't be one on this side of the millennium. What they do care about is winning the next election.

This isn't just a matter of charisma or "electability" — if it were they'd all be talking up Hezza's chances and Major would be nowhere at all. Backbenchers realise that the way to beat Tony Blair is to pay the middle classes a lot of money — and since there isn't any economic growth to speak of, the only way to get it is by raiding the welfare budget.

No one doubts the resolution of cold-eyed right-wing fundamentalism when it comes to cutting public spending, so on the face of it this should give John Redwood — or Michael Portillo in a second round — a lead of several lengths of clear blue water over Major's boat.

But the prime minister, delighted by the rave reviews that greeted the debut of his imitation hard-case act in the Downing Street rose garden last Thursday, has been playing a kind of deranged Vinny Jones in front of the shaving mirror. Aides have been sent to the Commons corridors to assure MPs that inside Nice Mr Major there is a ruthless, stony-hearted beast waiting to get out. They're saying Big John is ready to mug the pensioners, throw single mums into the gutter and kick ass the length of the dole queue without compunction.

This has already led rivals to bid up the bastard threshold (if you're disabled, suffering from ME or chronically depressed — watch out) and the scene in the tearoom is beginning to resemble a machismo competition in a high-security prison. There's no saying yet who the winner is going to be, but if you're old, poor, sick or receiving benefit, you're already one of the losers.

'Urquhart'

MAN IN THE EYE

THE last time John Redwood had an office at 10 Downing Street was from 1983 to 1985 when he was "seconded" from the merchant bank N.M. Rothschild to head prime minister Margaret Thatcher's policy unit.

She picked the 32-year-old fellow of All Souls and Rothschild investment manager with a special purpose: to prepare the ground for the privatisation of most of the publicly-owned industries in the country.

Without actually leaving Rothschild, Redwood worked furiously at his heroine's behest. In 1985 he returned to the bank and secured the very safe seat of Wokingham in Berkshire. He entered Parliament in 1987, declared his interest in Rothschild, and was a backbencher for only a couple of years before Thatcher put him into the department of trade and industry (DTI) to mastermind the privatisation programme he had initiated.

By that time the programme was in full swing. In the City, where the rewards were enormous, the chief beneficiary was N.M. Rothschild. The bank had its snout in the privatisations of British Telecom, Britoil, British Gas, Royal Ordnance, British Airways, Rolls Royce, British Airports Authority, British Petroleum, British Steel, water, regional electricity, Northern Ireland electricity and British Coal.

When John Major took over from Thatcher in 1990, Redwood was promoted to minister of state at the DTI, where he was responsible for increasing competition in industry. As a messianic believer in free enterprise, he agreed at once to be interviewed for a 1992 BBC2 programme called *The Fix*, which was investigating illegal price rings in industry, especially the building industry.

Redwood declared himself utterly opposed to such rings. He became irritated and embarrassed when asked about a price-fixing arrangement entered into in May 1984 by UBM, a subsidiary of the building supplier, Norcros. The arrangement had been exposed after a small businessman (of the type often praised by Redwood) had written to complain to Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher had passed it to the Office of Fair Trading, which found that UBM had indeed been part of an illegal price ring. It reprimanded the directors and told them not to do it again.

At the time of the illegal deal, of course, Redwood was a director of UBM's parent company, Norcros. He told the BBC he had known nothing about the deal and that such deals were not the policy of his company. Asked whether UBM had been sold by Norcros in 1986 because the illegal deal had been uncovered, he replied: "No, that was not the main reason."

After 1992, Redwood moved to the department of the environment, where he immediately started handing out huge slices of government money to Tarmac, the large construction company renowned for its generosity to the Tory party (and its humane offer of a directorship to Cecil Parkinson when the latter was forced to resign from government over the Sara Keays affair). Tarmac was given more than £50 million for selflessly agreeing to snap up sections of the government-owned property services agency.

No one has a higher opinion of John Redwood's intellectual abilities than, er, John Redwood. He hates criticism and reacts ferociously to it. In 1991 the London *Evening Standard* published an article setting out criticisms by the Law Society of the stock exchange's paperless share settlement system, Taurus. Redwood sent for the chairman of the offending Law Society committee and furiously denounced him for irresponsibility, pedantry and lack of foresight. At the same time he fired off a huge article for the *Standard*, praising the Taurus system to the heavens.

Taurus was an unmitigated disaster. It collapsed two years later, and Redwood was promoted to the cabinet.

PS: Redwood's main supporter, Norman Lamont, is the former Chancellor who presided over most of the above privatisations. As soon as he was sacked by Major he went back to the bank which used to employ him, Rothschilds.

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Street of Shame

JONATHAN AITKEN may be taking quite a pounding from papers such as the *Guardian* and *Independent*, but in some liberal circles he is still something of a hero.

In a story headlined "Jonathan Aitken 'was the prostitutes' friend' ", the *Hampstead and Highgate Express* recently reminded its readers that in 1979 he voted for the protection of prostitutes bill. It quoted Helen Buckingham, a "former leading vice-queen", who said she had met Aitken twice during her 1970s battle to decriminalise prostitution.

These meetings between the MP and the prostitute were confirmed by Dr Christine Pickard, who told the *Express*: "I am sure they did meet... on a campaign basis."

This Pickard is an interesting character. She is an old friend of Aitken; she used to write a sexual advice column for the *Sun*; and she also pops up in Boy George's recent autobiography, *Take It Like A Man*. Boy George reveals that when he and his friend Mark Vaultier were trying to come off heroin, his GP "gave me methadone (a heroin substitute) and asked me to stick to the dosage. I promised I would. He didn't know I was procuring medication from other doctors, like Dr Christine Pickard, who visited me and Mark at home in Hampstead." Following Vaultier's death from a drugs overdose, the inquest was interrupted by George's father, Gerry O'Dowd, who started shouting questions at Dr Pickard.

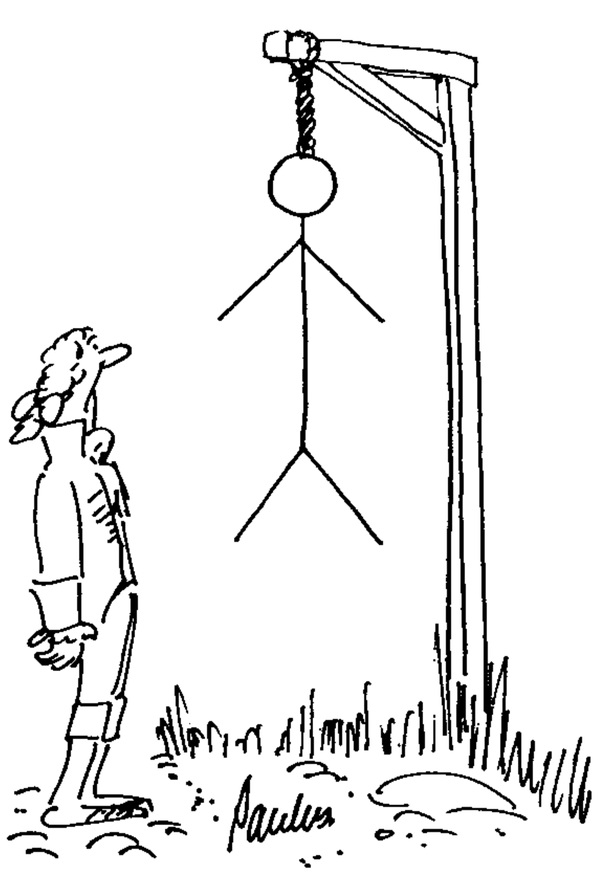
Now that her chum Aitken is in the news, several reporters would also like to ask Dr Pickard one or two questions. Alas, she seems to be rather elusive at the moment. According to one rumour she is on holiday in Switzerland, while others suggest she is visiting relations in Yorkshire. Either way, we feel sure that she will turn up before long.

"IT'S A great system called capitalism, and we need more of it," writes the *Guardian*'s refreshing columnist Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft.

Gates adds that with state interference, consumers are the big losers. But some of Microsoft's own customers have also been losing something recently.

Those taking up the offer of free demonstration time on Microsoft's forthcoming Internet service may not be aware of a background "sniffer" program which reports the contents of their machine back to Microsoft.

Customers accustomed to thinking of their computers as private have found themselves sharing their information with Bill Gates. The details report whether rival software is installed, giving the company the opportunity to bombard users with personalised junk mail. Curiously, in spite of subsequent outrage on the Internet, the *Grauniad* had strangely neglected to report the story.



NIGEL DEMPSTER had a tremendous scoop in his *Mail on Sunday* column on 18 June. He revealed that Kitty Kelley had abandoned her intended biography of Prince Philip, and was reduced to writing a general book about the House of Windsor instead.

The problem, he explained, was that she had "run into a wall of silence" despite employing "an army of researchers, who interviewed Buckingham Palace laundry staff".

Alas! Not for the first time poor old Dumpster had got it wrong. The president and chief executive of Warner Books in New York, Laurence Kirshbaum, has sent him a stinging letter pointing out that la Kelley was never commissioned to write a book about Prince Philip. Nor had she hired an "army" of researchers: "In fact, there is not a single researcher working for Kitty in England, and there never has been."

Showing a scandalous disrespect for the hack who was once known as the Greatest Living Englishman, Kirshbaum's letter to Dumpster concludes: "It is sadly evident that you are more interested in functioning as a mouthpiece of the Palace than as a credible journalist working for a serious, important newspaper."

DR Thomas Stuttaford is a former Tory MP who now earns a crust practising as a doctor and writing a medical column for the *Times* (even appearing on TV adverts recently).

As the *British Medical Journal* noted last month, he "has cultivated an image of the amiable, avuncular, home counties doctor who may not be quite at the cutting edge but who can be relied upon for solid advice." But the *BMJ* is not fooled. In an extraordinary editorial it has accused the good doctor of "a conflict of interest".

The cause of its outrage is a long feature by Dr S. urging *Times* readers to have an exhaustive medical screening every year. Although Stuttaford's article didn't mention the fact, not everyone agrees that frequent check-ups are such a good idea. According to the *BMJ*, "one of the biggest problems that results from doing a great many screening tests on healthy individuals is that you find abnormalities in people who have none. These people are then rendered desperately anxious and obliged to undergo other tests, some of which will again be falsely positive."

More strangely still, he didn't mention the NHS once, even though it does offer a basic screening service. Instead he drew attention to the facilities offered by private firms such as BUPA — the "brand leader", which offers both a "standard package" and an "à la carte" menu of tests. By a happy coincidence, BUPA began a major television advertising campaign on the very day Stuttaford's piece appeared. By an even happier coincidence, Dr Stuttaford is himself employed by BUPA.

IT SEEMS it was only yesterday that left-wing Labour MP Michael Meacher lost his celebrated (and expensive) libel action against the *Observer*, which had suggested he wasn't really working class. So it was reassuring to find him last week at the Footstool, one of Westminster's most expensive eateries.

The gallant Meacher was lunching *à deux* with the *Observer*'s Polly Ghazi, and he could not have been more charming. "You don't need to worry about what's fattening," he observed as the happy pair studied the menu. "I don't know any woman who needs to worry less about their figure," he then gushed as the food arrived.

The fiery socialist tucked into staple working class fare — goat cheese crouton with pimento and roast guinea fowl sprinkled with pine nuts — and one can't understand how there was ever any doubt as to his social background.

MAX "Hitler" Hastings put in an appearance at the farewell party for Susannah Herbert, the statuesque *Telegraph* hackette who is now taking charge of Londoner's Diary on the *Evening Standard*. Hitler is, of course, a former editor of Londoner's Diary himself, so Herbert took the opportunity to ask the great man if he had any advice.

"My advice," he boomed, "is to sack a lot of people."

Private I-I-I!

THIS ISSUE'S rundown of the nation's most self-obsessed columnists, based on the number of incidences of the word "I" per column-inch.

		Ego Rating
1	Suzanne Moore (Big Issue 18/6)	1.90
2	Magnus Linklater (Times 23/6)	1.80
3	Taki (Spectator 20/6)	1.43
4	Harry Enfield (IoS 18/6)	1.14
5	Rory Bremner (Independent 24/6)	1.10
6	Michael Winner (Sunday Times 25/6)	1.04
7	Valerie Grove (Times 24/6)	1.03
8	Patrick Robertson (Times 20/6)	1.02
9	Esther Rantzen (Daily Express 19/6)	1.01
10	Michael Argyle (Spectator 20/6)	1.00

Bubblin' under: Justine Picardie, Jonathan Miller, A.A. Gill, David Mellor.

WHEN the boisterous Thatcherite Simon Heffer was appointed deputy editor of the *Daily Telegraph* last year, it seemed he would in due course become editor of one of the *Telegraph* papers.

But now, alas, his chances of promotion have dwindled. Heffer is said to be increasingly disenchanted by the *Torygraph*'s transformation into the *Daily Hellograph* (masterminded by home editor Sue Ryan, who is known at Canary Wharf as "officer in charge of Liz Hurley"). And so he recently accepted an invitation to visit Northcliffe House and discuss his career prospects with Sir David English, chairman of Associated Newspapers.

If he does decide to move, the Hefferlump may be in for a shock: for the *Daily Mail* is, if anything, even more obsessed with Liz Hurley than the *Daily Telegraph*.

THE *Sun* was so excited by Prince William's success in the Eton entrance exams it splashed the glorious tidings all over the front page. Fittingly enough, the hack chosen to cover this momentous event was the newspaper's resident "Eton toff", Bill Coles.

Coles previously tried to get his feet under a desk at the Current Bun during the reign of Kelvin Mackenzie. Attempting to sneak under the bullying madman's radar, the hapless toff's la-di-da accent was, alas, picked up by Kelvin's sensitive antennae. "Who's that posh git?" he bellowed. "Is he taking the fucking piss or what? We can't have hacks sounding like the upper fucking class. Get rid of him. NOW!!!"

The wounded Coles had to wait until Kelv jumped ship before clambering back on board the new, classless *Sun*.

MARTIN WAINWRIGHT, known as one of the *Grauniad*'s more intrepid reporters, excelled himself in his coverage of the Bradford riots.

The ever-enthusiastic hack had the chance to show his investigative flair uncovering the sources of the riots among Bradford's Asian population. One of the first people he went to was Councillor Bridget Maguire, a local politician whom he quoted extensively in two of his articles.

He said she had been reelected "with a thumping majority by her largely Asian neighbours". Actually the Heaton ward, which Maguire represents, was recorded as being 21.7 percent of Pakistani origin by Bradford council's research section, so it is hardly a "largely Asian"

Why was Wainwright keen to quote Maguire as his local council source? Certainly not because her flatmate, one Tessa Wainwright, is the sister of the dauntless Martin?

DUNCES at the *Daily Mirror* excelled themselves when attacking the government's schools policy recently.

From nursery schooling and teaching standards to resources and exams, the dismal rag awarded the Conservatives a whole nought out of ten.

Few would dispute that Britain's state schools need something — but they don't need help from the *Mirror*. Under the heading "Literacy and Numeracy", the once great socialist organ's verdict was: "Failed to reduce them. In fact, they're rising."

HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! THERE has been fierce bidding for the Imran Khan-Jemima Goldsmith wedding snaps between Benazir Bhutto's government in Pakistan and Sir James Goldsmith. Everyone, it seems, wants to savour the saucy, long lens *paparazzi* shots of the very happy couple on the balcony of Sir James's villa above Marbella.

Curiously, it is Madame Laure Boulay de la Meurthe, Sir Jimmy's mistress, who has conducted the delicate negotiations and bought the racy pictures. But how did she know with whom to deal? Step forward Sir Nigel Pratt-Dumpster, the great social commentator, who gave Sir Jammy the name of the offending photographer and whose reward was to be invited to the (second) wedding reception in Richmond, Surrey, on condition he did not write about it. (He *did*, but only in the most grovelling terms.)

The Marquesa has of course examined the expensive honeymoon snaps in detail, and she can reveal that the world's most famous Islamic couple are still passionate admirers of the British missionary tradition. Most impressively, the great ball-tamperer kept his panama hat on throughout proceedings!

HALLO! POOR Henry Kissinger. The night before Queen Brenda was to make the old double-dealing doctor a knight (Order of St Michael and St George), he was pouring out his heart over dinner to his old chum Sir Charles Powell (pronounced *Pole*, to rhyme with *prole*), Lady Thatcher's insufferably snobbish former foreign affairs adviser.

"What are all my intellectual friends back in Washington going to think of me going to Ascot — riding in a carriage with the Queen?" wailed the doctor.

HALLO! *TO ASCOT with Sir Charles Pole's amusing Italian wife Carla, where — horror of horrors — she is initially refused entrance to the royal enclosure.*

Instead of her ticket she presents the flunkey with a Harrods receipt, and only after a big kerfuffle is she allowed in — just in time to witness the rather amusing humiliation of Sir Nigel Pratt-Dumpster.

He attempts to greet Ingrid Seward, the glamorous editor-in-chief of Majesty magazine, with a kiss, only to have Ingrid turn her back on him. Elsewhere a thirsty transport minister Stephen Norris is enjoying himself so much he is overheard to mumble: "I think I'll take the bus home."

"Terry, meet Mum and Dad"

HALLO! UNDETERRED by the failure of her moronic Californian zillionaire husband Michael Huffington Puffington Guffington to buy himself a seat in the in US senate, the hugely ambitious Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington is changing tactics.

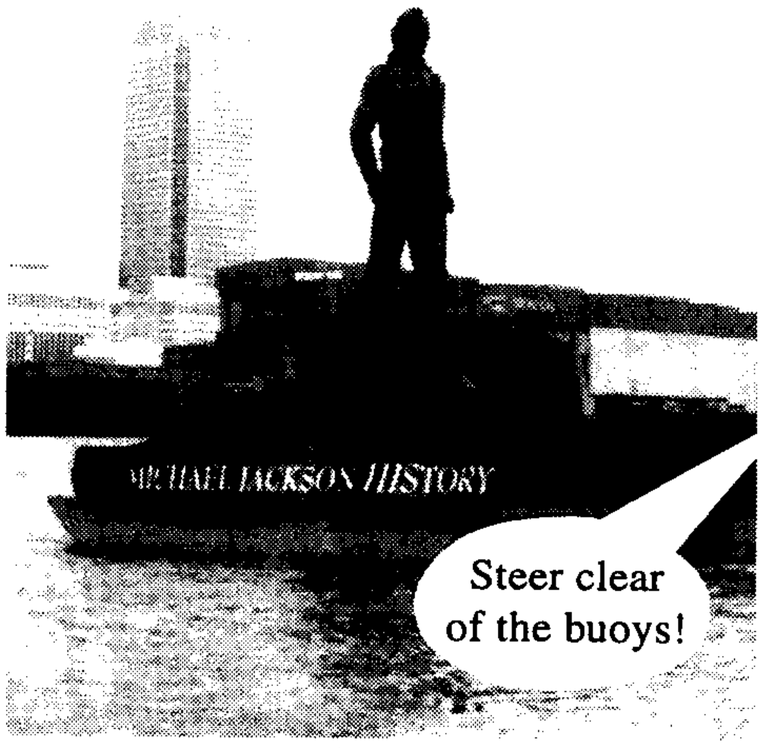
Arianna has now become close to Newt Gingrich, even joining the loony Republican right attack on immigrants in the US. This is bit rich given that she was relying on her husband to get into the White House because the US bans those born abroad from becoming president.

HALLO! TO the royal car boot sale at the Duke of Gloucester's pile in Northamptonshire, Barnwell Manor, from where Princess Alice, 93, is being booted out so her avaricious son can rent it out for £30,000 a year while he lives rent free at Kensington Palace.

Indeed, the wretched Richard seems to have little respect for relatives, dead or alive. Among the 1,000 lots are childhood effects of the late Prince William of Gloucester — who, but for a fatal flying accident in the 70s, would now be duke. One American dealer buys a child's high-chair with a silver plaque inscribed: "Presented by the Women of Northamptonshire on the birth of Prince William, December 18 1941."

It goes for a whole £32 — who says our royals are cheapskates?

BENT STAR TOWED INTO HARBOUR



HALLO! CONGRATS to my friend Lady Colin Campbell who has won £250,000 from Associated Newspapers thanks to Peter McKay, the World's Worst (And Most Expensive) Columnist.

In March 1992 in the *Evening Standard* he twice repeated the highly sensitive and legally contested allegation that she had been "born and raised a man". When the writ hit the fan, McHackey turned for help to Michael Thornton, an intimate friend of Lady Colin and the biographer of her late stepmother-in-law, Margaret, Duchess of Argyll. Thornton ended up so outraged by his treatment by the sly McHackey he gave evidence for Lady Colin instead!

No one is angrier than Paul Dacre, the former editor of the *Standard* and a co-defendant in the libel suit who now edits the *Daily Mail*. He wanted to buy Thornton's sensational forthcoming biography, which details the Duchess of Argyle's Ugandan discussions with a certain royal and two Tory cabinet ministers. It was to spearhead the *Mail*'s autumn drive — but thanks to McLie Thornton has now offered it to the *Telegraph*.

HALLO! *THE Duke of Edinburgh, president of WWF International, has been lambasting opponents of the exploitation of Madagascar's coastal forest where Friends of the Earth campaigner Andrew Lees died recently.*

"An area that is not environmentally frightfully significant," sniffs Phil, blaming FoE for "blowing up out of all proportion" the damage that would be caused by the mining multinational RTZ that wants to extract titanium from the area.

For several years RTZ donated office space at its St James's Square HQ to the Duke of Edinburgh Award International Association, and last year the duke attended a party in RTZ's honour, awarding it a certificate for its "outstanding contribution". But of course all that is irrelevant.

HALLO! AS Naim Attalah-Disgusting prepares to step down as chief executive of Asprey — and Anna Pasternak touts her schlockbuster novel *Feud* (about the Palumbo family divide) around publishers, the Marquesa has been granted a peep at the contents of some fascinating correspondence.

It is from Pasternak to Attalah, and hails from the days she worked for him at Quartet, his publishing arm. Suffice it to say the letters are of a gushing nature, not dissimilar in prose style to her charming novella, *Princess In Love*.

The owner of these valuable documents, who photocopied the originals when she worked alongside Pasternak at Quartet, feels they might be of interest to a wider readership. I hope Attalah and Pasternak treat this incursion into their privacy with the contempt it deserves.

HALLO! DR Germaine Greer, former *Guardian* babe, is becoming disturbingly litigious (see *Eye* 874).

When an admirer sent her a lighthearted note pointing out that her Stump's Cross home was not in up-market Cambridgeshire but in downmarket F* Me Essex instead, a thunderbolt arrived by return of post from La Greer's solicitor, Harbottle and Lewis, threatening an injunction. Clearly, she won't be swopping her sensible gardening shoes for white stilettoes just yet.**

HALLO! SPRINTER Linford Christie has been objecting manfully about references to his "lunchbox", a term coined by the *Sun* after he won olympic gold in Barcelona. Such innuendo demeans him, complains Christie, and is racist.

How odd. Last year Christie signed a deal with the Banana Group of importers, which marketed its product alongside the lycra-clad athlete with the come-hither slogan "Linford's Powerpack." Linford, says the group's ad agency, "approved the campaign at each stage." Well, he was going for gold, after all.

'The Marquesa'

HAVING acquired the infamous fax from Patrick Robertson to Jonathan Aitken, the *Independent on Sunday* reproduced what it called "the memo in full". In fact there was one small omission: after a passage in which Robertson warned that "at least three papers are sniffing around", a line was blacked out on the advice of the *Sindie*'s libel lawyers.

What the memo actually said was this: "...at least three papers are sniffing around something disgusting (i.e. worse than extra-marital sex)".

What could be worse than extra-marital sex? We can only assume Robertson was referring to the export of arms to Iran by a company of which Aitken was director.

JOHN MAJOR's epitaph was meant to include not just the motorway cones hotline but a reformed "classless" honours list. But a closer look at this month's roll of honours shows that some things never change.

Handfuls of gongs were ladled out to old Tory contacts and company bosses prepared to put shareholder funds into Conservative coffers. While fewer than 1 per cent of British companies are Tory donors, more than half the top industrial honours went to businessmen financially connected to the Tories!

Two of four knighthoods for "services to industry" went to Terrence Harrison of Rolls-Royce and Richard George of Weetabix, companies which bankrolled the Tories during the recession. And MPs Tristan Garel-Jones and Harold Elletson, who work part-time for BP, must have been especially pleased that a knighthood went to their boss, BP topdog David Simon.

The strike rate was just as good for CBEs — even though there is of course no connection between shareholder subsidies to the Tories and CBEs for Laporte's Ken Minton and Whitbread's Peter Jarvis. (Mind you, a candid Whitbread spokeswoman told the *Eye*: "We're true blue all the way through!")

NCM Credit's paid parliamentary adviser Keith Hampson must have been chuffed that his boss Colin Foxall was honoured. But most surprised of all must be shareholders in Pearce Signs Group. They thought their company had been going through a rough patch — but even when Pearce sank to a £400,000 loss in 1992 their chairman managed to slush some money to the Tories. Who made that wise investment? Step forward Brian Pearce, CBE.

TORY MPs aren't the only ones whose business activities would be curbed if the sleaze-busting Nolan report were ever enforced.

Take Dr John Gilbert, millionaire Labour MP for Dudley East. The register of members' interests shows that he owns his own political consultancy firm, John Gilbert & Associates Ltd, so he is unlikely to support the ban proposed by Lord Nolan on MPs working for lobbying firms.

He also lists four fully remunerated directorships. The first two are building firms — builders Kyle Stewart Ltd and roadbuilders Edmund Nuttall Ltd — and Nolan might frown on the latter given Gilbert's former career as a transport minister.

The next listing is for the American Heritage Fund Inc, which is a mutual fund to which Gilbert gives guidance on shares. Labour party members in Britain may be slightly suprised to see Union Carbide (of Bhopal fame) in the fund's portfolio.

To top it all Gilbert is an "international adviser" to Jardine International Insurance Brokers Ltd. Which could explain why he is no longer sponsored by the Municipal Boilermakers' Union, whose members are constantly fighting for industrial injury compensation... from insurance companies.

What working class Dudley voters make of their MP is unclear. Although he has had problems with reselection in the past, in the current New Labour climate the 68-year-old recently sailed through final selection for the new Dudley North seat.

THE emergence of Tim Eggar, energy minister at the department of trade (DTI), as an enemy of the oil giant Shell in the Brent Spar rig fiasco, surprised his admirers.

Ever since striving as a backbencher to procure for stockbrokers Wood Mackenzie and the merchant bank Hill Samuel a bigger slice of the privatisation cake, Eggar has been seen as a close ally of the big energy companies.

His favourite is British Gas, for whom he recently did a huge favour. When water was privatised in 1989, small businesses were allowed to sue water companies for compensation when they ruined businesses by digging up the streets. During the recent debate on Eggar's new gas bill, a clutch of small business enthusiasts on the Tory side demanded compensation from British Gas for firms who lose money from dug up streets and other gas works.

Eggar infuriated the enthusiasts by saying that "traders must take the risk of loss due to temporary disruption of traffic flows along with all the other various risks of running a business".

IN THE wake of the Brent Spar debacle Britain is just starting to realise what the oil companies and government are planning to do about clearing up the 200 oil and gas platforms and 4,000 miles of pipeline in the North Sea.

A "consultative document" (issued months late in May — see *Eye* 870) makes plain how the government is planning to ignore the law. It says: "The 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf stipulates that 'any installations which are abandoned or disused must be entirely removed.' The UK is a party to this Convention which is still in force. However, the accepted view is that this provision has to be interpreted in a way which is consistent with the object and purpose of the Convention, and *as far as possible* with customary international law..." Or in other words: "We are going to tear it up and laugh."

Law is not a strong point with energy minister Tim Eggar, who ended up with egg all over his face. He responded to Shell's surrender by saying: "There is no reason why the British taxpayer should pick up any of the bill." The treasury then explained to him that there was a very persuasive reason: the 1990 Budget, devised by John Major.

It gave the companies a ridiculous tax concession — the right to charge all of the cost of disposing of oil platforms against petroleum revenue tax, meaning that 60 per cent of the cost has to be paid by the taxpayer (see *Oils Well That Ends Well, Private Eye,* 13 April 1990). So Eggar amended his bluster with a plea to Shell to be charitable to the government as "an act of contrition".

TERESA GORMAN has a convincing explanation for her spectacular failure to conform to the planning rules when altering her mansion in Essex. She says she simply didn't realise permission was needed to alter "listed" historical buildings.

But wait... what was the name of the applicant who on 14 July 1977 sought permission to alter a listed building, namely 14 Lord North Street, Westminster, by demolishing the first floor extension, the outside WC and the garden shed? You've probably guessed: none other than T.E. (Teresa) Gorman.

WHO WAS that walking down the aisle of the House of Commons arm in arm with Robert "Cream Bun" McCartney, the new Unionist MP for North Down? It looked rather like Kate Hoey, the former Northern Ireland high-jump champion, who is now Labour MP for Vauxhall and party spokeswoman on sport.

Could this be the same Kate Hoey who was once on the Irish committee of the International Marxist Group, which called for victory to the IRA?

Or the same Kate Hoey who in 1972 was arrested (and later cleared) for conspiring to cause a riot outside Downing Street as part of her activities with the Anti-Internment League?

Or the same Kate Hoey who, when elected to parliament in 1989 (after being "imposed" by the Labour party executive in the teeth of local opposition) told a Belfast newspaper that she "yearned for a united Ireland"? Yes, the same.

"It's probably just road-rage"

WHEN Tony Blair, Margaret Beckett and Gordon Brown went to Reading for a meeting of Labour's national policy forum, local Labourites were delighted by the support "head office" was showing for middle England.

Certain Labour councillors were not given the chance to shake their leaders' hands, however. Carefully kept out of the limelight were councillors Tony Page and Maureen Lockey, both of whom have run into some bad luck of the sleazy variety recently.

Lockey has been convicted on three counts of forgery and Page has pleaded guilty to gross indecency. Not the face New Labour wants to world to see...

JONATHAN EVANS, the ambitious minister for corporate and consumer affairs, has been oiling his claims for a cabinet seat should his boss at the department of trade, Michael Heseltine, ever oust John Major.

Evans, a dripping wet, told hacks in his Brecon and Radnor constituency (majority: a huge 130) that Hezza had behaved splendidly by coming to the House and explaining ("in public", he stressed) the ins and outs of the BMARC affair. By contrast the prime minister had allowed himself to be harangued ("in private", Evans emphasised) by 50 Euro-nutters. "That's the difference in approach," he concluded smugly.

Evans made the pitch at the start of another race — a 20-mile marathon for fell runners on the hills of mid-Wales, sponsored by the bookie William Hill. It quoted Hezza at 7 to 4 against favourite in the Downing Street handicap.

JUNIOR transport minister Steven Norris has become bolder in his ambition for promotion to the small firms portfolio at the trade department: he even discusses his aspirations in the House of Commons tearoom.

The incumbent small firms supremo, Lord Ferrers, is a former Coldstream Guard and lord-in-waiting, Norris reminds admirers, so hardly the man to appeal to the party's "garagiste" wing. Presumably Norris, a former secondhand car dealer, is better suited to that.

"Steve" does of course have a spectacular small business track record. In 1988 he took over the (rather large) Scottish electronic business, Glentronic. Under his stewardship it soon became very small. By 1991, Glentronic had become very small indeed — it went bust, owing creditors (many still unpaid) £800,000!

IT WAS very unfair of the last *Eye* to report the gift of a £10,500 Rolex watch from the emir-dictator of Bahrein to William Powell, Tory MP for Corby, without mentioning all the other MPs who declare similar "gifts of jewellery" after visits to Bahrein. They are Tony Marlow (Northampton North, Con); Martin Redmond (Don Valley, Lab); and former militant Durham miners leader Bill Etherington (Sunderland North, Lab).

'Backbiter'

NOOKS and CORNERS

TERRORISM doesn't pay, does it? Ever since the IRA planted the large bomb in Bishopsgate which, among other things, half demolished the late medieval church of St Ethelburga two years ago, controversy has raged over what to do with this sweet and ancient little building.

The diocese of London, about to enjoy the advice of My Lord Templeman on how to get rid of more tiresome City churches, certainly did not want the wretched thing rebuilt, nor did the vibrant slappy-clappy congregation of St Helen's nearby, to whom St Ethelburga's had been given once it had been at last made redundant.

But many felt that to abandon St Ethelburga's and to put a nice, useful, profitable office block on the site, or even just to leave it as a "memorial" garden, would be to grant a victory to the IRA. So many in the City, supported by the *Times*, campaigned for St Ethelburga's to be rebuilt — especially when it emerged that much more survived of the original building than had originally been supposed. The Friends of St Ethelburga were formed and began to raise money. So, in the end, the diocese of London agreed to hold a "conservation development competition" for the site.

The result has now been announced. The Enemies of St Ethelburga do not give up: the assessors — the architect William Whitfield, the developer Trevor Osborne, and Lady Howe — have not chosen one of the commercial schemes, but nor have they chosen the restoration scheme by Rothermel Thomas which was backed by the Friends of St Ethelburga's. Instead they have selected a scheme by Blee Etwein Bridges which was not one of the five shortlisted in the two-stage competition, nor one of the two further developed after consultation with the City planners. This design, the assessors assure us, is "a more poignant statement than extensively rebuilding the pre-bomb church".

Is it? In the winning scheme, just one arcade and the side and south walls of the old church are kept below a new curved roof and behind a new half-glass entrance facade. For some reason an asymmetrical balcony "meeting area" fills half the space of the old nave, while the aisle really serves as an entrance passage to the new block containing 3,500 square feet of offices in the churchyard behind. This is for the vestry of St Helen's, Bishopsgate, and its army of administrators.

What may be of interest and significance is the fact that the "Blee" in Blee Etwein Bridges is our old friend Mr Anthony "Twee" Blee, the well-known freemason and professional "expert" witness at public inquiries, always ready to rubbish listed buildings for a fee (*Eyes passim ad nauseam*).

Once upon a time, Mr Blee was an architect, and the exciting wavy roof in his scheme is, perhaps, a reminiscence of the happy days he spent with Sir Basil Spence. Perhaps not. Poor old Spence managed to score a triumph with his new Coventry cathedral while, after the second world war, some French and German architects succeeded in using the ruins of old churches in interesting ways to create powerful new churches. This design is not in the same league, I think.

But clearly it gives St Helen's what it wants. Interestingly enough, a partner in the firm of Weatherall, Green and Smith, the City surveyors charged with organising the competition for the diocese, is Mr John Brown, a churchwarden at St Helen's.

As they have demonstrated with the treatment of their own medieval building (*Eye* 854), the bright evangelicals at St Helen's don't really like churches at all. So all the way through, the Friends of St Ethelburga's had to accommodate their objections to restoring the old steps and putting back the fittings. The Blee Etwein Bridges design, in contrast, provides a nice clean space for having coffee.

The assessors justify their choice with the tired old moralistic arguments of the Modern Movement: a full scholarly restoration would have "less architectural relevance" and be "largely a reproduction rather than a restoration". So what?

It would be perfectly possible to recreate St Ethelburga's: much of the material survives and what the National Trust has achieved at Uppark shows what can be done if the will is there. So what will now happen to all the carefully preserved medieval masonry and the piece of Ninian Comper's lovely screen? Choosing Blee Etwein Bridges effectively consigns them to the rubbish dump.

The result of this competition is compromise and funk. If the bishop of London endorses it, St Ethelburga's will not be restored as a shrine or even as a chapel for prayer, let alone as a monument to victims of terrorism. It will merely be a picturesque curiosity in the entrance foyer to a second-rate office block. Well done, Gerry Adams.

'Piloti'

WATER NEWS

THERE is no limit to the ingenuity of Welsh Water in its attempts to boost profits.

Last year the company made £605,038 from many of its poorest customers by adding arbitrary charges for "solicitors' fees" to summonses for non-payment.

As Ofwat, the water regulator, points out, the summonses are actually issued by computer and the figure charged, £24.75 on a £250 bill, is completely unrelated to real costs. With typical chutzpah, Welsh Water argues that the charges are fixed by the lord chancellor's department according to the size of the debt. In reality, the company makes up the charges as it goes along: a bill of £107.80 is charged at £15 and a bill of £100 at £10.

And while Welsh Water claims that a solicitor oversees court cases, fewer than 1 percent actually end up in court, so how Welsh Water comes up with a figure of £24.75 is, as Ofwat says, a "mystery".

Perhaps Paul Twamley, Welsh Water's finance director (salary: £120,000 pa) or Graham Hawker (salary: £139,000 pa) can explain.

Pseuds Corner

Mr J.A. Lowe and Miss S.C. Kirby
The formal engagement is announced, from onboard Concorde, of John, son of Mr and Mrs A.R. Rowe of Isleworth, Middlesex, and Sarah, elder daughter of Mr D. Kirby of Slawston, Leicestershire, and Mrs P. House, of Bury, West Sussex.

The Times

The show is as much about the talking side of things as the music side of things. It's attitudinal, topical, provocative — I think some of the things I say teeter on the brink of outrage.

NICKY CAMPBELL
BBC Radio 1 promotional brochure

John [John Wayne Bobbit] looked up and fixed me with the earnest gaze of a worried 12-year-old.

"Do you think I'm stupid?"

He knows that's what people say about him. One TV chat show host actually turned from interviewing him to his live audience and said: "This guy is so stupid." But stupid, I think, may be the wrong word. There's some other problem, maybe a problem of the fragmented futility of the postmodern condition. But how do you explain this to John?

BRYAN APPLEYARD
Sunday Times Magazine

I remember spending ages trying to decide between Canadian, Turkish and French lentils. Turkey was out because it had capital punishment and a lousy human rights record. Canada had a large fur industry. The French secret service sunk the Rainbow Warrior. In the end I bought UK-grown split peas instead.

Letter to The Big Issue

I believe in talking about the real world, about the news, about people's lives. I remember hearing one DJ boast that he hadn't been to Tesco for six years — I thought it was an incredibly arrogant thing to say.

NICKY CAMPBELL
BBC Radio 1 promotional brochure

Q. Was *Boxing Helena* a backward step?
A. When I first heard about it after Kim Basinger backed out of playing the part, I was as horrified as anyone else. A woman with no limbs — in a box? Ridiculous! But then I read it and found that there's a twist at the end. Without that I wouldn't have done it. Besides, what has the guy done to her? He's helped her realise that the body is what it's all about. He's dismantled the walls that keep you from getting to the real person. That's so freeing to her soul.

SHERILYN FENN
You Magazine

patheticism — 18 & 19 aug 1995
a conference to be held at Trinity College Dublin seeks participants from various disciplines to theorize the irony-free zone as a necessary consequence of the attenuation of the autonomous subject.

patheticism

- attempts to synthesize disparate accounts of pathos and the pathetic.
- indicates a desire to move beyond the bounds of irony via an unapologetic occupancy of a position which is from the outset acknowledged to be untenable.
- is the post-camp valorization of mediocrity and self-deprecation, the slacker ethos of paralysis, the democracy of failure, and any other excesses of hyper-individual introspection (from any era).

Advertisement

CONTRIBUTORS: D. Axson, S. Mead, D. Orr, M. Gilligan, T. Noake, A. Eastmond.

£10 paid for entries

TV

Castles (BBC1)

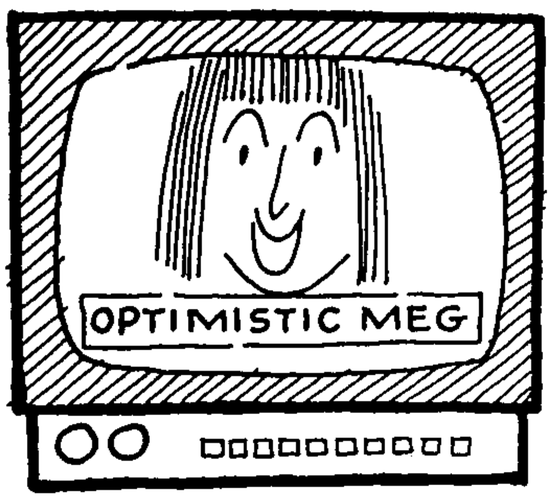
"THE first middle-class soap in living memory!" everyone cried, and already you could pick up the first whiff of failure, mixed with the curious feathery stench of chickens coming home to roost.

However good, bad or middle-class it is, *Castles* was probably doomed from the start. This grim, depressing tale of an extended family torn apart by marital strife and internecine rivalry has proved to be moderately well written, moderately well performed and, all things considered, moderately uninteresting. But even if it had been a work of genius, *Castles* would have struggled to build up an audience. It is now 10 years since the last successful soap opera (*EastEnders*) was launched. It might be more than 10 years before the next one.

A new soap that works is television's Holy Grail. The rewards are great but the probability of failure is rather greater. Nonetheless, fearless TV producers are forever devising and developing new formats, and even, if they're really lucky, getting to make them as well.

So far this year we've endured Granada's late-night ecclesiastical fiasco *Revelations*, which was so bad it has been recommissioned for a second series; and the BBC's recent toe in the water, *Crown Prosecutor*, which was clearly designed to be expanded into a full three-times-a-week soap if it worked (it didn't). Both, incidentally, were unequivocally middle-class, as was Granada's last foray into the daytime soap market, *Families*. So much for that little claim to uniqueness, then.

But why do they all fail? Part of the problem, of course, is *Eldorado*. Memories of this most calamitous of soap misjudgments linger in the minds of executives, producers, critics and, most importantly, viewers, who now expect every new soap to be this way. If anything *Castles* has been a disappointment because it hasn't been as bad as *Eldorado*.



"I predict that if you win £22 million you will live happily ever after"

Watching this wilfully drab series, you start to remember with fondness the much hyped combination of sun, sangria and Swedes who couldn't speak intelligible English even if their lives depended on it.

At least *Eldorado* made you laugh. Like all the new soaps, though, *Castles* is obliged to be unlike *Eldorado* as is humanly possible. This means not only that it is cheap, but that it has to be seen to be cheap. Most drama series try to look as expensive and lavish as possible. *Castles* aspires instead to the ramshackle and the visibly cardboard. People shout at each other in kitchens and bedrooms, or if budgets are really tight, over the telephone.

This latter is, in fact, something of an innovation. No one has ever used the telephone much in a soap before: it was always deemed insufficiently visual. In *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders* they go to the pub. In *Brookside* they bump into each other in the Close. In *Howards Way* and *Trainer*, most notoriously, they drove around to each other's houses for 30-second conversations. But in *Castles* they phone each other up. It's all they can afford.

The other more fundamental problem is that the British viewing public is all soaped out. Over the past five years only *Emmerdale* of the five prime-time long-runners has not added a third weekly episode. *Coronation Street*, *EastEnders*, *Brookside* and *The Bill* have all become highly efficient soap factories, churning out episodes at such speed that exhausted cast members have been resigning in droves. Even the most dedicated soap fans have trouble keeping up with it all. Watching soap is hard, time-consuming work. There's only so much a couch potato can take.

That said, *Castles* is not good enough. There's little humour and, four weeks in, no obvious sign that anything is going to happen. In soaps very little does happen, but the trick is to make it seem as though everything is happening and *Castles* can't manage it. Rather eerily, the widespread acceptance of its ultimate failure is already echoed in *Radio Times*, where every episode is laboriously described as "the ninth [or whatever] in a 24-part drama series". Perhaps it is trying to reassure us. Only 15 episodes to go, only 14 episodes to go, only 13 episodes to go...

'Old Couch Potato'

BIRT SPEAK

WORLD SERVICE workers at Bush House are being subjected to an old fashioned time and motion study which, aka an Activity Log.

The working day must be plotted across five boxes: Time Period; Activity/Transaction; Specific Output; For Whom Adds Value; and Distraction. For those employees who still do not parler Birtspeak, the forms come with extensive definitions:

Activity/Transaction: *That which occupies the time — may be activities, processes, transactions, interactions with others, and so on.*

Specific Output: *What is actually produced by the activity; what tangible result or output is achieved, what is delivered?*

For Whom Adds Value: *Who is the main beneficiary of the output? Who gains from what has been produced? What value has been created, for whom?*

Distractions: *Who/what gets in the way? What problems are encountered during the activity or in the delivering of the output? What prevents the effective execution of the activity? What goes wrong? Who interferes with the process? What factors create underperformance or sub-optimisation? Who else needs to contribute/be informed?*

As an ironic footnote explains, the word "output" should of course be used "in the non-broadcasting sense".

CHAIRMAN of the BBC governors Marmaduke Hussey will be much relieved at this week's settlement of the potentially highly expensive libel action brought by De Beers over the two-part documentary *The Diamond Empire* shown in April 1994. Chairman Hussey was a long-standing trustee of the Rhodes Trust, which has a close association with the Oppenheimer family who rule De Beers.

Despite breathing fire and spending heavily on legal advice, De Beers settled for a lengthy statement in court, a less than grovelling apology and no damages. It will even pay its own costs — not insubstantial knowing Carter-Fuck and James Price QC.

But De Beers has scored one highly unusual victory. As part of the deal the BBC has agreed not to show the documentary again or to sell it abroad. That may have been what De Beers wanted more than money. After all, it means the programme will not now be seen where it really matters and could hurt most — in South Africa, Namibia or Russia.

The other main De Beers concern was to refute suggestions of collaboration with the Nazis over the wartime supply of industrial diamonds — not a nice thing to say even about former Jews. In order to correct that slur De Beers was prepared to drop other objections to the highly critical programme.

But then had the case gone to trial De Beers would have faced not only potentially embarrassing disclosure of company documents regarding its operations, but also the need to produce senior executives, including the saintly Harry O., to be examined about the secret workings of the diamond cartel.

the worst
LIKE, RIGHT, ER WHAT I DON'T GET LIKE, ABOUT THESE GUYS AT THE ITC, LIKE ...
IS IF THEY, ER, DON'T LIKE MICHAEL GRADE, LIKE, HAVING PRICKS ON TELEE, LIKE...
WHY DON'T THEY TELL HIM TO SACK ME!
VERSACE COLOSTOMY BAG
Ian Pyne

WORLD OF HYPE

APING the example of Glasgow ("Glasgow's miles better"), Liverpool's Mersey partnership called in the spin doctors recently to launch a pro-Merseyside poster campaign.

Unfortunately it employed the local Finch advertising agency, and the creative geniuses there left hacks who attended the breakfast-time launch choking on their croissants.

The first poster showed a photo of two Liverpool football players with the caption "Liverpool is down to a handful of strikers" — a neat reminder of the region's dreadful record on industrial relations.

The second poster drew even louder gasps, however. Above a caption reading "To make a Japanese worker even more productive, turn him into a Scouser" was a picture of a Japanese man complete with a curly wig and moustache. The "idea" was that he had turned into a chirpy, Harry Enfield-style Scouser. Given that Enfield's characters are pissed-up, unemployed gits who are prone to punch-ups, all sensible people will continue to give Murkeyside a wide berth.

IN Tesco's latest TV ad, a baby sits gurgling in the back of a car as it pulls into the supermarket's giant car-park. The driver's companion explains that the child's parents have asked her to take the infant to the park.

"But this isn't a park," says the female driver, "it's a car park."

This pisspoor joke will raise no laughs in Crawley, West Sussex, where campaigners spent months a few years ago trying to stop Tesco building a giant car park over a large part of their local school's, er, park...

"Perfect – it's black, Irish and gay!"

THE first party for Mirror Group's dynamic and almost certainly pisspoor Cheap TV (*"Live! TV", shurely?*) was for the workers, and Mirror bosses were so mean that security men had to be drafted in to serve the drinks.

This resulted in pissed and pissed-off party-goers making off with a security camera, so at at the expensive "celeb" launch last week security was unbreachable. Bouncers at south London's Hop Exchange had intructions to eject anyone without an official invite, which meant that *Daily Mirror* editor Colin Myler was turned away along with his gormless deputy, Brendan "Chucky" Parsons, and promotions chief Amanda Platell.

Mirror managing director Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson (salary: £261,000) was also barred. "Do you know," demanded "Gorbals", enunciating carefully as befits a former editor of the *Times*, "who I am?" The gorilla took one look at him and, perhaps recognising a fellow countryman, snarled: "I dinnae gi'a fuck who y' are!"

The bouncers then tried to bar a weasel-like figure wearing a suit and strong Ulster accent — until Mirror managing editor Nick Fullager explained that it was chief executive "Dancing Dave" Montgomery.

LEGAL NEWS

THE travails of David Cocks QC have continued with a meeting of the Commons treasury and civil service committee on 12 June at which he was branded as a "pathological liar" by Labour MP Brian Sedgemore.

Cocks, who had led the prosecution of disgraced investment adviser Roger Levitt, had subsequently criticised the "carve-up in the judge's room" which resulted in Levitt pleading guilty to the lesser charge of misleading Fimbra, the regulatory authority, in return for a non-custodial sentence of 180 hours' community service.

Yet Cocks himself had been intimately involved in the plea bargain, which the attorney-general, Sir Nicholas Lyell, has denied was ever made. When George Staple, the director of the serious fraud office (SFO), gave evidence to the Commons committee, Sedgemore asked him: "Do you seriously expect that it is satisfactory that you appoint counsel who should lie to you so that you can mislead the attorney-general?"

Staple: *No, it certainly is not satisfactory, but I think you are talking about what Mr Cocks said on a television interview and that is certainly beyond any control I have.*

On 19 June, within a few days of being called a "pathological liar" by Sedgemore, Cocks began a session as a recorder at the Old Bailey. However, by the end of the week he had mysteriously withdrawn from this high profile role. He is due to appear before the Commons committee on 11 July.

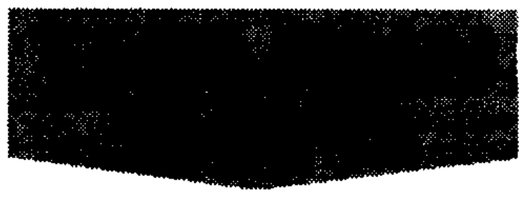
NO WHERE is the majesty of the law more majestic than Liverpool, where even the lawyers are reporting one another to the police for alleged assault.

Solicitor Julian Linskill, who is defending Colin Ungi, the brother of murder victim David Ungi, on a firearms charge, has accused fellow lawyer Robert Broudie of duffing him up in Liverpool's main Bridewell on 12 June.

Broudie — who is defending John Phillips for the attempted murder of David Ungi six weeks before he was finally gunned down proper — is counter-claiming that Linskill was responsible for initiating the fisticuffs.

For some reason other scouse lawyers liken the Linskill v. Broudie match to a contest between a peacock and a rodent. Inspector Knacker is hugely greatly amused — and has advised both to contact a solicitor without delay!

HACKWATCH



RUPERT MURDOCH has made it clear that he, and he alone, will decide the *Sun*'s editorial line at the next general election. But as he explained in his recent interview with *The Money Programme*, Rupe hasn't yet decided which way to jump.

This leaves the *Sun* in a quandary. Without clear guidance from the boss, how can editor Stuart Higgins know whether to offer vigorous support to John Major — or try to drive him out of office ASAP?

Careful readers of the *Sun* (if such people exist) will have noticed that the paper's political allegiance has been lurching all over the shop in the past few days:

13 June: "It's not sour grapes when Maggie lashes the hapless bunch who took over after kicking her out," the *Sun* announces. "Her stinging rebuke that 'they have hit at everything I believe in' says exactly what millions of us think." So should Major quit? No, there is still hope. "The Tories can win the next election if only they start behaving like Tories again. Mr Major can begin by admitting the lady's right. And doing something about it."

17 June: Another day, another opinion. "John Major's had it. He's finished." Or not, as the case may be. "His only hope — a small one — is to climb off the fence. Major must face down Kenneth Clarke and Michael Heseltine..."

19 June: Only two days after being described as the man who must be "faced down", Michael Heseltine is suddenly the hero of the hour. In an editorial headed LET HEZZA TEAR INTO LABOUR, the *Sun* denounces Major as a daft git with unpopular policies. "We need tax cuts and tougher public spending," it warns. "And the Tories need a new party chairman with the guts to turn the heat back on Labour. That man can only be Michael Heseltine."

20 June: Still dizzy from the somersaults of the past week, *Sun* readers are now treated to a leader in praise of Heseltine's arch-rival. "They're calling Michael Portillo the Young Pretender. It's a ridiculous put-down. Why shouldn't a man of 42 be a serious contender for the Tory crown? After all, he's only 20 days younger than Tony Blair. Portillo's critics say he lacks the experience to be PM because he's untried and untested. But he's held posts at the departments of transport, environment and social security. He's been No 2 at the Treasury and is now Employment Secretary. If Portillo's 'untried and untested', what does that make Blair?"

23 June: Major has resigned. Can he expect an endorsement from Wapping in his leadership campaign?

It seems so. The *Sun* hails his resignation as "a bold gamble... Shrewdly, he has tried to lock the Cabinet into pledges of support, believing the only threat to him is a no-hope stalking horse. Unlike Maggie Thatcher, who was also stabbed in the back over Europe, he's not going to wait for Michael Heseltine to come after him with the carving knife. That is good news for the Conservative Party and good news for the country. Hezza's not the man..."

Inevitably, there is a "but". We are reminded that John Major's government "has had oh-so-many failures, too. Major has suffered bad luck but he has suffered far more from bad judgement. *This time he hopes he has got it right. But don't bet on it.*"

24 June: Yesterday the *Sun* thought Major had been "shrewd" to force his cabinet to support him. Today, apparently, it thinks otherwise. "It is essential that the REAL players are allowed on the pitch," it thunders. "The Cabinet should be freed from their meaningless oath of loyalty."

26 June. Having previously praised the leadership election as a "bold gamble" which was "good news for the Conservative Party and good news for the country", the *Sun* now decides that it exemplifies "the trait John Major has shown above all others — the grasping at gimmicks and short-term expedients to delay making a tough decision".

In its 17 June editorial — robustly titled "Climb Off The Fence, Major" — the *Sun* argued that "Major has made the tragic mistake of being afraid to speak his mind in case it upsets someone. He has become a symbol of a party torn apart by a lack of purpose, paralysed by indecision." One might say the same of the *Sun*'s leader-writers. Can't the Dirty Digger make up his mind and put them out of their misery?

FURTHER EDUCATION

ANOTHER university principal has found a job lined up neatly for his spouse when he starts his new post.

Glasgow university's new principal Graeme Davies takes over in October — when his wife Florence will also start as part-time senior research fellow in the English department. The highly envied post (for which, happily, she is qualified) was never advertised.

Unlike the furore at Edinburgh university over the job given to the new principal's wife, the authorities in Glasgow are unashamed. They admit that the position was created solely for Mrs Davies, but deny it was a pre-condition of her hubby's appointment.

The Glasgow Association of University Teachers has passed an angry resolution urging the university to stop calling itself an "equal opportunities" employer.

LLOYD'S

IN THE small print of the latest report from Lloyd's of London (which shows losses of £1.9 billion) is a wee item showing how the men in charge are nobly sharing in the spirit of sacrifice which pervades the insurance market.

The two deputy chairmen, Robert Hiscox and John Stace, have doubled their salaries — from £25,000 to £50,000 — to compensate them for the heavy (but part-time) work they do for Lloyd's.

Both men plainly need the money: Hiscox coined just £10 million last year from the sale of his managing agency, and John Stace's Stace Barr agency is one of the most lucrative in the market.

DOING THE ROUNDS

"I AM confident Sir Kenneth will ensure that the largest trust in the country continues to have strong leadership during a time of change." So said health minister Gerald Malone of Sir Kenneth Eaton's succession to the chairmanship of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS trust.

He succeeds Lord Hayhoe (who demanded to be let out early), and Ken clearly has a deep understanding of the complexities of NHS management. An engineer by training, he has been in the Royal Navy all his life, most recently as admiral and fat controller in charge of the Trident submarine programme.

Unfortunately, this all went horribly wrong when it was revealed earlier this year that 20 firms of management consultants working on the programme in Scotland made more than £240 million because no cost limits were placed on their contracts. At the Trident facility in Strathclyde, mistakes forcing redesign in the middle of construction cost taxpayers a further £900 million, with workers recalling general "panic and chaos". At the time MP Alan Milburn, a member of the public accounts committee, said: "This is the worst misuse of public funds I can recall." Just the chap for the NHS!

● **NORTH Staffordshire hospital** is minus a brain surgeon after Donald Cambell quit because doctors are (allegedly) being forced to treat patients on the basis of where they live, not how seriously ill they are.

The trust has separate contracts to treat patients in **Staffordshire, Shropshire** and **Cheshire**. Once a contract has been fulfilled, patients from that area with serious neurological disorders are overlooked in favour of those with lesser ailments who are fortunate enough to live in an under-contracted area.

As Mr Cambell put it: "I can no longer practise medicine ethically in the NHS. Since the reforms, the service has stopped treating people according to clinical need. My department used to be run by a senior sister. Now there is a ward manager, a business manager, an accountant and a head of personnel, all with secretaries. Sister needs a requisition signed by an administrator to order a box of 20 wipes for the patients."

● "THE recent history of the **London Ambulance Service** has provided an object lesson in how not to manage a public service," concluded the Commons health committee. "The assertive and insensitive approach of LAS management led to industrial relations and operational disasters. Their passivity and reluctance to take hard decisions have perpetuated fundamental problems in the service and therefore its massive under-performance."

The service, it appears, has got no better since the computer crash of 1992 which forced the resignation of chief executive John Wilby. Martin Gorham has been in the saddle ever since, as has health secretary Virginia Bottomley. As the report says: "Had the political will existed at ministerial level, the problems of LAS might have been effectively addressed years ago."

"I think we can disregard this report on cooks and their effect on broth"

● THE rosy observations of life at **Cambridge's Adenbrooke's hospital**, as featured so nauseatingly on BBC1's *Hospital Watch*, are a tad out of kilter with the experiences of patient Mr R. Rose.

"After a bad road accident, I was sent home within hours while the man who hit us stayed all day. On another occasion, I suffered a heart attack but was sent home by bike because the doctor didn't think anything was wrong. When I was finally admitted, the staff were rude and short tempered and the nurses slept on duty. And they left poo in the pan all night." Odd that didn't get on camera.

● **LONDON's Whipps Cross hospital** claims to be "the highest performing hospital in **North East Thames**" as regards initial assessment in casualty targets, seeing 97 percent of patients within five minutes. A visit from **Waltham Forest community health council** revealed that this initial assessment is little more than a brief lookover by a D grade nurse. Proper triage assessment often takes place more than an hour later.

● PETER REAY, chairman of **Westmorland hospitals NHS trust**, recently tried to give **Morecambe Bay health authority** manager Lois Willis a confidential briefing on the trust's £5 million shortfall and a possible secret merger with **South Cumbria community and mental health trust** or **Lancashire hospitals trust**. Unfortunately, it wasn't Ms Willis he ushered into his room, but *Westmorland Gazette* reporter Helen Williams. Mr Reay was advised of his error and tried to put a stop to the story. When that failed, he put a stop on the merger. Or so he says.

● MANAGERS at **Dundee teaching hospitals trust** are picking over the results of a staff opinion poll. Only 21 percent expressed pride in working for the trust, more than half worried about job security, 67 percent suffered low morale, less than a third thought the patients received high quality care and 52 percent disagreed that the patient was the trust's top priority. And that's the good news. A massive 13 percent had confidence in top management and a whole 6 percent believe management care about their staff. Half were stressed out and half (presumably the same) didn't have the equipment to carry out their jobs. Chief executive Tim Brett said: "It seems we have a long way to go to achieve our vision."

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

West Midlands regional health authority has launched an inquiry into the death of 23-month-old Robert Benton, who was bounced from **Sandwell hospital** to **Good Hope hospital** to the **Children's hospital** to **Heartland's hospital** over an eight-hour period before a surgeon could be found to perform emergency surgery. He died.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

HAVING just led a joint British Medical Association-National Farmers' Union con- ference on the dangers of nerve-gas based organo-phosphorus sheep dips (*Eye* 874), NFU vice-chairman Tony Pexton — this time with a three-man advisory team — was last week facing the Commons agriculture committee (prop: Sir Jerry Wiggin) on the same subject.

One thing puzzling some committee members was why the NFU had previously sent written evidence which made no mention of these dangers. Noting the deficiency, Jean Corston — the fragrant MP for Bristol East and not too-distant neighbour of Droopy Willy — gave Pexton every opportunity to make good the omission. But he was not to be drawn and simply opted for a pious statement about a need for "more awareness" of OP dangers.

Even when offered, by an untypically accommodating Wiggin, a chance to demand a place on the licensing committee which monitored the safety of OPs, Pexton — to the amazement of the committee — instead asked for speedier procedures to license yet more deadly chemicals. His aim was to keep the UK in the forefront of the veterinary medicines industry.

Congratulating the poison peddlers for their efficiency, Pexton and his team then fled the building, leaving angry farmers who had witnessed the debacle to conclude that the true meaning of NFU had indeed become *No F***ing Use*.

EVEN as the NFU gathered for its less than finest hour, a drama was unfolding in a Manchester hotel room of enormous significance to the meat trade — a key test for the Maffia's hidden agenda to close down more than 200 surviving abattoirs, which produce much of Britain's best quality meat.

Jim Law, a Bacup pig farmer (see *Eye* 874), was appealing to an "independent" tribunal against the Maffia's decision not to license his slaughterhouse on the ground that it did not comply with its fanciful interpretation of an EC meat hygiene directive.

Maffia minister Earl Howe has personally pledged that his three-man tribunal is indeed "independent" and will weigh the evidence in a completely objective fashion. To make sure of this, the tribunal's "independent" chairman is a retired barrister, Mr Michael Ware. It is only a coincidence that he spent his entire career in government service working for the department for terminating industry (DTI) and the environment department.

The "independent" panel member representing the meat trade happens to have an interest in one of the "EC-approved" mega-abattoirs which are so anxious to see their smaller companies put out of business. And the third "independent" member just happens to be a vet who used to work for the Maffia. It is also a coincidence that the tribunal shares the same postal address with the Maffia headquarters in Tolworth, and that the Maffia is providing it with secretarial help.

Equally it must be a coincidence that the members of the tribunal chose to stay in the same Manchester hotel as the Maffia witnesses appearing before them.

So far observers note that, despite days of questioning, the witnesses have not been able to come up with a single legal or scientific reason Mr Law should not be given his licence. They conclude that it will be the most extraordinary coincidence if the "independent" tribunal comes up with the verdict that the Maffia has been planning all along — that Mr Law should be put out of business.

THE industry tabloid *Farming News* is having difficulty convincing readers that its south London-based hacks are in touch with the nitty-gritty of practical farming — despite (or because of?) an in-house puff boldly proclaiming its ability to "sort the wheat from the chaff". The accompanying picture showed a scarecrow very clearly in one of the biggest fields of *barley* the photographer could have found. No doubt editor Donald Taylor had taken advice from the NFU.

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

....TRACTOR'S TURNED OVER ON OLD TOMMY'S LEG YOUR LORDSHIP!! BROKEN IN SIX PLACES!
GOOD GRIEF!! DONT MOVE IT TILL WE GET A SPECIALIST DOWN THERE!!
LATER
LOOKS A NASTY ONE YOUR GRACE. HAVE TO TAKE IT ONE STEP AS A TIME...
FIRST, WE SHIFT THAT THICK SOD FROM UNDERNEATH!
REGS GARAGE

THE Rotten Borough Advertiser

BALLS-UP WITH BARINGS

IF YOU had £120 million to invest, would you give it to Hammersmith and Fulham council? Er, probably not given its frightening investment record.

In 1989 the council lost more than £200 million in a disastrous foray into the arcane world of interest rate swops. More recently corrupt council officials cheated taxpayers of a modest £650,000 in housing and council tax swindles which resulted in 13 sackings and 33 resignations after the scandal was exposed.

So it is disquieting to learn that the London Committee on Accessible *Transport*, which ensures free travel in London for pensioners and the disabled, has elected Hammersmith and Fulham as a "lead" borough to invest the £120 million paid to transport operators during the year.

Hammersmith and Fulham's mismanagement of the accessible transport fund has not yet come to the public eye. But of the £120 million it administered, the council managed to misinvest £112 million, breaking its own investment guidelines in 13 separate cases.

While four brokers were approved to place deposits, spreading the risk of losing the money, Hammersmith and Fulham used one broker for more than £100 million of the total. One of its investment choices, which certainly had not appeared on the recommended investments list, was Barings Brothers with whom £10 million was placed. Fierce legal wrangles over who was liable for lost money ensued between the borough and the joint committee when the bank crashed. But what does the council now have to say about jeopardising free public transport for London's pensioners and disabled? "It's all water under the bridge now that Barings has been saved," said a spokeswoman.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

WHY is South Shropshire district council considering a planning application which would stick a suburban housing estate in the village of Stoke Saint Milborough, a designated area of outstanding natural beauty? And what is local councillor Claude Bodenham doing about it? As chair of the council planning committee, chair of the Ludlow conservation area advisory committee, and as a member of the Ludlow joint traffic management group he is well qualified to tackle the would-be developer of five new houses — if the developer weren't Claude Bodenham.

LAMBETH STEW

THREE months ago Lambeth's new chief executive Heather Rabbatts spoke optimistically of bringing about a change for the better in the loony council — and doing so quickly.

She talked of staff seeing a difference in three months and of the people "out there" feeling a change within six months. In reality things seem to have gone from crap to complete crap.

Since April, when Rabbatts started work, events surrounding the suppressed "porn ring" report (see *Eyes passim*) have become increasingly violent. Incidents include the attempted murder of a key witness, death threats, exploding cars, the ransacking of homes and the dowsing of witnesses in petrol. Inspector Knacker is now investigating what it is some people seem so keen to keep secret.

Inside the town hall, meanwhile, the big question is: whose idea was it to recommend to the porn inquiry panel (which interviewed more than 100 staff) that it should not record evidence or have witnesses sign their statements. By failing to do either the chances of bringing successful disciplinary charges, let alone criminal charges, were much reduced.

Another "change for the better" has been recentralisation of the housing benefit section. The result has been total chaos as urgent housing benefit and council tax queries remain unanswered, telephone lines remain stubbornly engaged, HB application forms not processed within three months are binned. In true Lambeth style hundreds of letters have been sent out threatening legal action... against those who paid their council tax bills early. *Plus ca change...*

MAD MONKLANDS

THE suspension of 17 councillors at Monklands — which may yet eclipse even Liverpool — sees the Scottish Labour party running scared and acting reluctantly years too late.

When John Smith was MP for East Monklands he steadfastly refused to conduct an inquiry into the conduct of his own local council. But the 32-page report by Professor Robert Black exposes Monklands' many acts of nepotism and indicates that more than one member may have been involved in criminal behaviour.

One section of the report suggests that 16 out of a total of 21 councillors had between them 68 family members working for the council. (One member had *eight* relations — two daughters, a sister, a sister-in-law, a brother-in-law, two nephews and a cousin — in work.) As Black points out, some council posts were not advertised but simply handed to relatives.

There is also the possibility of a majority Catholic cabal operating, most of whom are members of the Knights of St Columba, an interest they do not have to register. The minority group of non-believers are said to have lost out when areas were selected for housing rehabilitation. Black, who legally could not name names, states that some councillors simply jumped to the top of the housing repair queue and may have used council workmen to do non-council work.

About 18 months ago Scottish Labour party bosses carried out their own "inquiry" into some Monklands councillors. Surprising nobody, they quickly gave the administration a clean bill of health. Shadow Scottish secretary George Robertson now denies that that investigation was a whitewash: he claims Prof Black simply had greater access to information. As ever, ill-served council taxpayers will pay: the Black inquiry cost £50,000.

IN BRIEF

BENT: Congratulations to Charles Wood, who retired as council chief executive after eight barmy years with a £200,000 lump sum and £25,000 a year pension on the grounds of ill health. He is now feeling better — and working as a high-flying consultant for Price Waterhouse, his latest job being to help choose new chief executives for Tower Hamlets and Hackney!

BIRMINGHAM: Labour councillor Matt Redmond has been booted out as chairman of the committee that controls the city's £20 million urban renewal grant. One of the highlights of his reign was his campaign against people who park on grass verges — which led to embarrassing pictures emerging of Redmond's own car parked on a grass verge at his home. Another was the £3,000 spent on calendars with his photo. The calendars are now collector's items — September has 35 days and November 33.

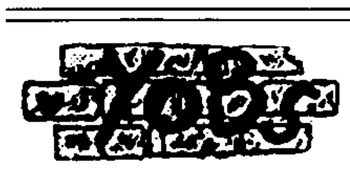
CAMDEN: Reorganisation of the Labour borough is a costly cock-up. The council has dealt with 220 industrial tribunal claims by ex-employees, to whom paltry out-of-court settlements had been offered. But as Camden loses more cases, settlements are rising. With each case taking about two days (barrister: £500 a day), remaining cases will cost more than £200,000. Add on payouts for unfair dismissal (an average £3,000 per individual), and if Camden loses half the cases (a conservative estimate) it will cost another £330,000. Total: nearly £500,000 — or the reorganisation "saving".

STOKE ON TRENT: Loyal lefties who condemn excessive executive pay have plenty to whinge about in the Labour-controlled city where council leader Ted Smith's special responsibility allowance is soaring to £8,000 from £3,500 and deputy Barry Stockley's has risen by more than twice over. Newcastle-under-Lyme (Labour) is also heading troughwards: senior members expect rises of up to 233 percent for administering their shrinking budget.

O·B·N

Certain columnists discussing Jemima's wedding to Imran suggested she is 'cerebrally challenged'. Well, they would, wouldn't they, having never met her. The truth is that she's very intelligent, very sensitive and full of life. Furthermore, it has been hinted that the marriage was orchestrated by her mother as Annabel's revenge on Jimmy Goldsmith for his lifestyle. This is plain vicious rubbish. Annabel and Jimmy settled their differences long ago and are now bound by a very strong friendship. Even people who don't like Annabel admit she is first and foremost a wonderful mother.

TAKI
Sunday Times


I won a goldfish at the fair, look.
What ya gonna do with it?
Get a free pint, watch.
Oi mate. There's a bleedin' fish at the bottom of my glass!
BAR

HUSBAND

SIGNAL FAILURES

THE deceased train driver blamed for October's crash at Cowden is a martyr to the authorities who are bent on destroying the Uckfield line in Sussex.

Whatever the driver did wrong, the accident would have been impossible had the line not been reduced from two tracks to one in a stupid economy drive in 1990. The theory is that single-track lines cost less to maintain — but since wear and tear is directly related to the number of wheels passing over the tracks, a single line simply requires twice the maintenance of a double-track line.

If anything, busy single-track lines are more expensive because they require complicated signals and points and can result in horrific accidents... like at Cowden, Newton and Bellgrove in Strathclyde. The accident on the Uckfield line provided the perfect excuse for the train service to be halved, making the service so unattractive that many travellers now drive to stations on better-served lines, often many miles away.

Falling custom could conveniently pave the way for closure of what was once part of an important route from London and Tunbridge Wells to Brighton.

THE privatisation pantomime is in full swing at Britain's busiest station, Clapham Junction, where it's no fun for people trying to catch trains.

Although it's served by several train companies, the station is run by South West trains (SWT) and earlier this month passengers were told at the booking offices that only SWT timetables were stocked. SWT later told the *Eye* that all timetables were available after delayed supplies had been received from other companies. But Network SouthCentral said: "Something has gone wrong. We've sent timetables to Clapham Junction and we're now in consultation with South West trains to get them distributed."

To which SWT responded: "That's not true." Oh yes it is. Oh no it's not...

SIGNAL Failures may have given the impression in recent weeks that rail privatisation might not result in the tangible benefits to the customer promised by the government.

We are now happy to correct that implication. This follows the introduction of free 20g packets of peanuts to "add value" to first class journeys on InterCity East Coast. Staff are under strict orders, however, to remove the nuts from refreshment trolleys before they are pushed into standard class. "Peanuts are to be kept out of the public eye," warns a memo, adding: "Peanuts usage should be equal or less than drinks sales" (*sic*).

Dr B. Ching

Pre-School Nursery Facility Rhymes

Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Her friend Trixibelle said "Fock it!"

Letters

Con-sultants

Sir,

*You shouldn't knock the two McKinsey consultants who fed the BBC an almost verbatim response to their own stated requirements (*EYE *874). They have obviously been well trained in the fundamental art of consultancy, namely:*

1. Client wants to know the time.

2. Consultant asks for client's watch and then tells him the time.

3. Consultant gives client his watch back with invoice.

4. Client happily pays invoice content that his ability to tell the time has been vindicated by a third party.

This is a well-tried and proven methodology and obviously shows a sound college education on behalf of these two consultants. Besides which it is also consistent with BBC policy on the provision of unnecessary repeats.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE VEVERIS,

Sinfin, Derby.

Cannon balls

Sir,

I wish to complain about the poor editorial standards of your magazine. Recently you printed a publicity photo of the legendary circus performer "The Great Brilloni" — but at ninety degrees to its true orientation. The photo shows the great man in mid flight having been fired out of a cannon with his beautiful Asian babe assistant. The picture was taken towards the end of his career when — deeply in debt — he could not afford the expensive protective suits and was forced to perform in an old vest and cap.

Yours,
JAMES BARLOW,

via Compuserve.

Indian take-away

Sir,

I love the EYE *view (873) that to Sonia Gandhi India is a bottomless box of freebies. It has only cost her a husband — and as a foreigner she couldn't be expected to go in for a touch of the old suttee; given her a son with all the socially acceptable crassness of the Indian eldest boy and a younger daughter spoilt as only Indians know how.*

Perhaps Sonia's problem is that she has learnt to beware of Congress politicians who come bearing gifts!

Yours sincerely,
RENUKA RAJKUMAR,

Alton, Hants.

Tip top

Sir,

Thank you for the publicity you gave in your last issue to the planned new publication I have been working on. Those of your readers interested in the truth should be aware of the following:

1. Jim Slater has never written a share-tipping column for the MAIL ON SUNDAY.

2. Jim Slater continues to contribute to the MAIL ON SUNDAY *occasional articles on personal finance. All the 2 million copies of his last article, which appeared three days before the last issue of* PRIVATE EYE, *must have escaped the net trawled by your investigative reporters.*

3. The publication I was planning last year, which you described as absurd, remains the same in editorial concept and commercial rationale. The difference is that its frequency is now to be set at a less risky once, rather than five times, a week.

4. The business plan and "Campaign-style" dummy (if you insist on calling it that) for the publication were completed nearly three months before my lunch with Mr John Coyle and I have now made them available for his inspection.

Yours faithfully,
CLIVE WOLMAN,

Mail on Sunday.

LUVVIES

"They were doing a full back shot of me in a swimsuit and I thought, 'Oh my God, I have to be so brave.' See, every woman hates herself from behind."

CINDY CRAWFORD

Submitted by Rupert Goodwins and Adrian Mars.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

Fog warning

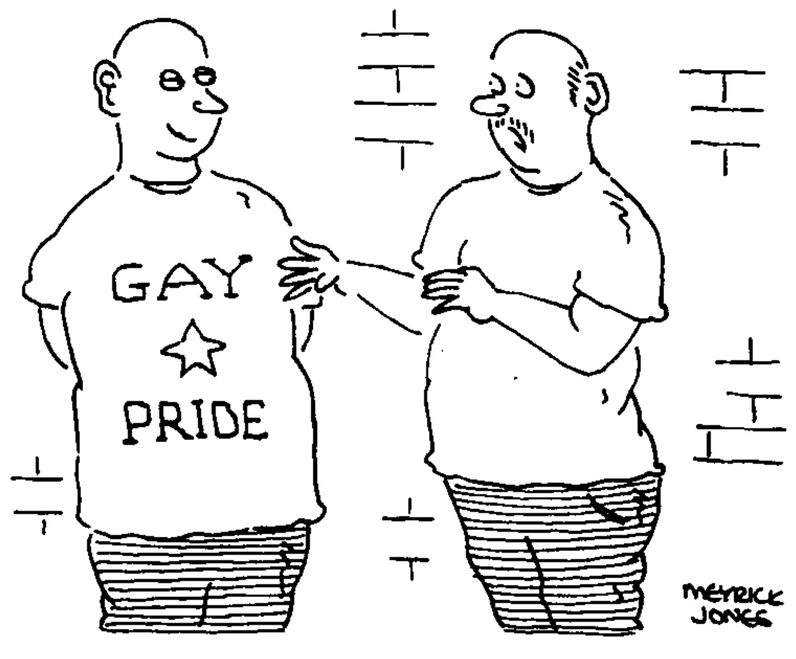
Sir,

*The ability of the Turkish state to cast a fog of deception over events in Kurdistan is evident in your correspondent's "Letter From Turkey" (*EYE *874). How can repression by the Turkish military be considered retaliation against the violence of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)? Kurdistan has suffered occupation and repeated assaults by the Turkish military since the foundation of the state in 1923. The PKK only launched its armed struggle in 1984.*

If a "multi-party democracy and free press" exist in Turkey, why are pro-Kurdish organisations, such as the Democratic Party (DEP) and newspapers like OZGUR GUNDEM *and its successors, harassed, censored and banned? Why are journalists and writers such as Musa Anter and Yasar Kaya either assassinated or imprisoned for attempting to expose what is happening in Kurdistan?*

Yours sincerely,
ALAN BROOKE,

Huddersfield, W. Yorks.



"It just doesn't seem very British, wearing one's arse on one's sleeve"

I-SPY

Linz, Austria

Submitted by David Gunning. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Drug deals

Sir,

I noted your story (EYE *874) about my patient's inability to gain a psychiatric bed in London.*

If your reporter had cast his net wider, he would also have found my letter in the BMA NEWS REVIEW, *which I consider to be equally important (as regards doctors' disenchantment with the NHS).*

Doctors who are high cost prescribers are to be offered financial inducements to cut their drug bills under the "Prescribing Incentive Scheme". This will mainly affect doctors trained abroad, who catch up on their medical education by listening to drug representatives harping on about the latest (and of course, very expensive) product.

Careful doctors who prescribe generics and not the latest "wonder" drug with ghastly side effects, will of course receive nothing. I am particularly incensed because I have been trying to get some reimbursement for acupuncture (on the NHS) for years. My drug bill is 30 percent below the national average.

Yours faithfully,
DR. R.E. ALEXANDER MB ChB MRCP Dip.Ac,
Pinner, Middlesex.

Lookalike

James

Weinstock

Sir,

There seems to be a remarkable facial similarity between the late Sid "Shady Deal" James and the acknowledged financial wizard Lord Weinstock. Can they be related?

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM MORT,
Liskeard, Cornwall.

The bridge to the isles

Sir,

Piloti's claim that the National Trust "has become much more responsible and open in recent years" (EYE *872) is hard to credit.*

He has clearly overlooked the selfless bequest of "inalienable" land for the approaches to the monstrous Skye bridge by the trust's Scottish branch (NTS). This great conservation body — motto: "For places of historic interest or natural beauty" — did not even bother to attend the hastily convened public inquiry.

I hope that those who are still members of the NT/NTS will consider investing future subscriptions in a more worthwhile organisation, preferably one not acting on direct orders from HM government's roads lobby.

Yours untrustingly,
JERRY COX,
Dunvegan, Isle of Skye.

Schools break up

Sir,

Congratulations on your "Nooks and Corners" feature on Sion College (EYE *874). There is, alas, more at stake than bricks and mortar.*

The old City of London School on the other side on John Carpenter Street was in the process of being converted into offices at the outset of the 1990s, when I was on Sion College's staff, and serves as an indication of the Sion building's likely fate — not demolition but conversion for business purposes.

To use a redundant City church to house those parts of Sion's stock which are likely to be of interest to the public and to undergraduates may not be ideal and laudable, but it is at least not worthy of condemnation. What is lamentable is that the older stock will no longer be as easily accessible to visiting scholars or to members, who could previously walk in off the Embankment and be guided to what they wished to see.

It is clear that the governors of Sion College believe that there is no demand for the facilities which it used to provide, that the clergy have better things to do than to pursue godly learning, and that the Christian faith no longer has anything to offer the mind of the intelligent or scholarly layman. God help us all if they are right.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW J. SMALL,
Aylesbury, Bucks.

Please address letters for publication to Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG or e-mail to strobes@cix.compulink.co.uk (marked "For Publication"). And the Eye's WWW page is now available: http://www.intervid.co.uk/intervid/eye/gateway.html

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"This tall, six-footed, tanned referee from Spain..."
JOHN CHAMPION, Radio 5 Live
(Ian Milsted)

"Beethoven... interesting to hear his Symphony No. 1. Obviously his very first symphony."
NICK BAILEY, Classic FM
(Matthew Wetmore)

"Well, we now have exactly the same situation as at the beginning of the race, only exactly opposite."
MURRAY WALKER, BBC
(Naomi Moneypenny)

"You can't get any earlier than the second ball of the game."
DAVID LLOYD, Radio 4
(Edwin Gibb)

"The Japanese scrum half is quite small, but he is very nippy..."
COMMENTATOR, Eurosport
(Dave Davies)

LETTER FROM BOSNIA

LIKE the Grand Old Duke of York, defence secretary Malcolm Rifkind marched his 10,000-man rapid reaction force (RRF) up to the commanding heights of media attention — and then somewhat more quietly marched them down again.

The RRF is now under the command of Yasushi Akashi, the Japanese head of the UN "protection force", Unprofor, and his first reaction was to assure the Serb hostage-takers that the force was in no way aimed at *them*. His second was to ensure that Nato would not intervene no matter how violently the Serbs breached UN security council resolutions. All this before returning four captured Serb war criminals who had used weapons and uniforms stolen from kidnapped French soldiers to kill some French on the bridge at Sarajevo.

This could appear perplexing, since the British and French reaction force was a hasty public relations exercise to salvage some glory after the ignominy of seeing soldiers surrender to a bunch of genocidal bandits with a tendency to run like hell when opposed by any serious force. But an RRF beholden to Akashi is oxymoronic. It will have the vigorous physical reflexes of a dead paraplegic.

London and Paris know this, which is why they were as eager to get the force under UN control as they had originally been to proclaim its independence. And that it is why America's Robert Dole and Newt Gingrich — who may not be nice but are not stupid — refused to allow the US to pay towards the "reinforcements".

There are suggestions the RRF is no more than a cunning longterm plot to prepare for the withdrawal of Unprofor. But this is silly. No one in Whitehall has a longterm plan any more elaborate than hoping the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his military sidekick Mladic simply become nice and everyone else will forget what they have done.

POLICE 5

ESSEX police chose an unusual new tactic to help crime victim David Coombes.

Mr Coombes had returned to his home to find that his tenants had left having packed their own bags and quite a few of his as well. Southend police promptly investigated the complaint seven months later — by going to the ex-tenants' new home and asking the startled man at the door if he had stolen anything.

The inquiry took an unexpectedly complicated twist when the man said "no". Police then arranged to come back to search the property, and asked if a date in three weeks' time would be convenient. The man said that would be very convenient indeed and, perhaps not surprisingly, the search turned up no evidence.

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

FUNNY OLD WORLD

"This evening, we have witnessed many things that defy science," Pastor Temitope Joshua told worshippers at the Synagogue church in Ikotun, Lagos. "You have seen the buttons on my robes flash with a heavenly light, without use of batteries. You saw the cancer of the breast that yielded its pus. And I have told you of Fatai, who had pissed continuously for six years, and had to wear four pairs of pants everyday to conceal his piss until I cured him. You also heard of the woman who dropped her dead son in the church and fled. Only I, recognising her mischief, revived him through fervent prayer and vigorous beating.

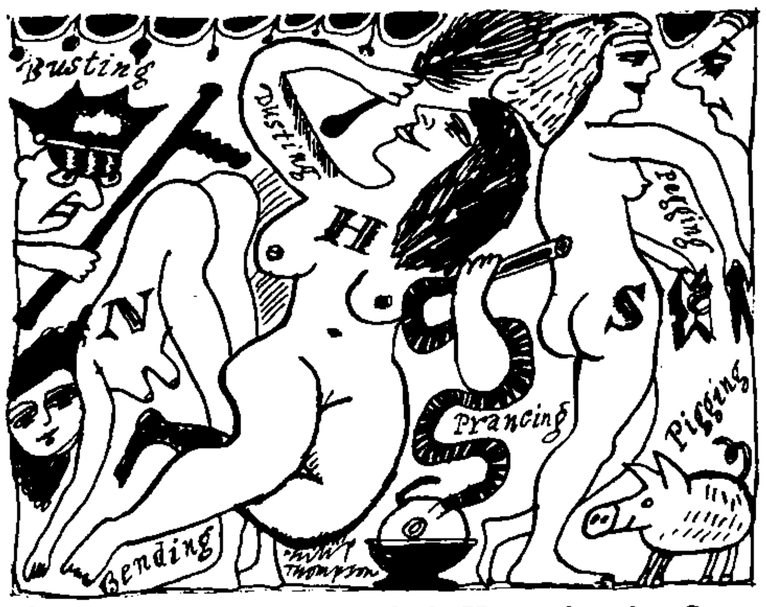
"Most miraculous of all, I have cured this man, Olobumni Ajayi, who came here crying in pain because his private organ had been erect for three days. I am a man of God, and I knew at once he was an oversexed millet grinder. His winkle was a visible sight to us all, so I told him 'You have committed fornication and have only a few days to die. Go to the toilet and ease yourself, while I pray for you.' And minutes later, he was restored to complete flaccidity. Alleluia."

A delighted Ajayi gave witness, saying: "I couldn't talk to nobody until I got to this place. Three days ago, I met a mystery lady on the street and took her to my hotel. But instead of satisfying my sexual desires, she stole my wrist watch and NI 6,000, and put a curse on me, causing blight to my millet and giving me a permanent erection. For three days, my private part sapped all my energy. Doctors were useless. Hospitals took my money, but to no avail. I was crying by the time I came here and found relief. Praise the Lord." *(Nigerian Tribune, 24/12/94. Spotter — Andi)*

— o —

o "It's true that, at present, the cleaning staff consists entirely of my wife and myself," Ronald Leazenby admitted to reporters in Kokomo, Indiana. "However, we pay good rates, so we expect to attract some younger employees before long, and we're convinced that NHS will soon be doing great business."

Angela and Ronald Leazenby, former abattoir workers both now in their late sixties, were describing what clients could expect if they hired



domestic cleaners from *Nude Housecleaning Services*. "For $50 an hour, a pair of male and/or female NHS employees will come to your house and do your laundry, wash floors, and do light dusting, fully nude. For $75, our staff will prance a little as they vacuum, and also climb onto furniture to dust pelmets. Our deluxe service costs $100 an hour, but that includes many extras, such as steam cleaning their upholstery, bending on request and the application of laundry pegs to wherever the client suggests. Such a service has not previously been available in the state of Indiana, and we believe it represents terrific value for money. Why the police keep raiding our premises is a mystery to me. As for the pig — I cure my own ham. And there's an end to it." *(The Toronto Globe and Mail, 17/3/95. Spotter — Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)*

— o —

o *"When I saw the doctor, he was just as baffled as me," pensioner Maud Clarke told reporters at her home in Canterbury, Kent. "He could hardly understand my accent and kept telling the nurses that I must be from Germany, but I kept telling him my mum's a cockney from Bethnal Green and my dad's from Peckham."*

Speaking with the help of an interpreter, seventy-three-year-old Maud Clarke explained what had happened to her, back in March 1994, when her voice suddenly changed beyond all recognition. "I'd just taken my neighbour Bill's dog for a walk, and got home to find my bungalow had been burgled. It was awful, and I cried so much that I lost my voice and had to be sedated. Eventually, my voice returned, but I found myself speaking in a heavy German accent, like this.

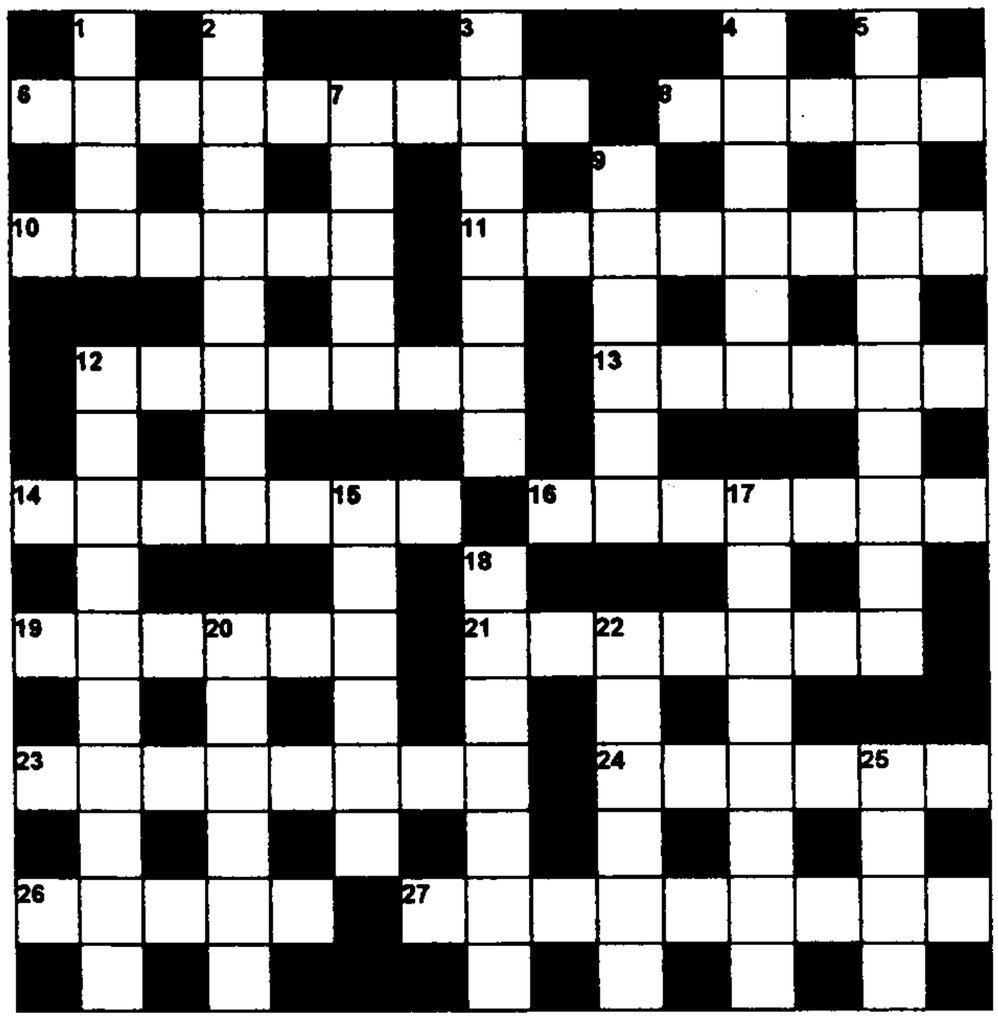
"I've had speech therapy for a year now, but it's done no good. I still speak like a German, and it gets on my nerves. Old friends phone up, hear me, think they've got the wrong number, and ring off before I can convince them I am Mrs Clarke. My granddaughter keeps calling me Hitler, and says she wants her old granny back. Worst of all, when German tourists overhear me in shops, they start talking to me in German, and get very shirty when I can't reply to them. Funny thing is, once every few months, out of the blue, I suddenly say a sentence or two in my old London voice, and then I start being German again. And I've never been further east than Ramsgate. It makes you think. doesn't it?" (Perth Advertiser, 14/2/95. Spotter — Anon)

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

EYE CROSSWORD 31 by Cyclops

£100 Winner ALAN DAWES



ACROSS

6 Interminably boring screwy Fry possibly would make an unphotogenic front-bencher (5,4)
8 Ejaculation which may have to be repeated to calm excited members (5)
10 Patsy gives well-known rub endlessly to Eggar (6)
11 Cads, singular liars — oddly enough not conservatives! (8)
12 Freak with spare testicle (7)
13 No. 10s sex acts? (6)
14/3 Not married but hot, pretends Mellor, mad for one who does what he once did (7,7)
16 Nuts — Boycott has one, like (7)
19 Cedric should take 50% cut, look around and quit! (6)
21 Pisspoor vodka's, oh, lacking a certain old Soviet craft (7)
23 Re-styled Blair's half left the old party ... (8)
24 ... politicians of old right stuffed into trusses trusses... (6)
26 ... a party for which Hanley's first to take refuge in cover-ups ... (5)
27 ... — let the dope get out of control. *(That's more than enough parties — Ed)* (9)

DOWN

1 Poll reveals Labour front-bencher needs spiritual education (4)
2 Suited, West Midlands Police style? (6,2)
3 (see 14)
4 Edward, as we know him: Brenda's pet almost getting up Brenda (6)
5 Penalising ref may thrust one up gutless fool (6,4)
7 In short, an association of genuine piss artists? (5)
9 Each little sod's wandering the city (6)
12 Tory politician's position in a double bed? (2,3,5)
15 Where readers can make a personal insertion of dick, so to speak (3,3)
17 Rather Tony dissociated from Right and abandoned yen to be leader of his country? (8)
18 Just like a politician's response — getting woman to conceal Visa spree (7)
20 Go under Eggar (6)
22 A time to beget without irony (6)
25 PM eventually forced to resign — paradise! (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 07.07.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 30

ACROSS: 7 Come out 8 Risque 9 Torrid 10 No-go area 11 Supermodels 12 Ing 15 Lincoln 17 Majorca 18 SNP 19 Andrew Neill 23 Reactors 24 Inured 25 Wanted 26 Suharto.

DOWN: 1 Act of Union 2 Emergency 3 Condom 4 Stoned 5 CS Gas 6 Penang 8 Regalia 13 Nick Leeson 14 Home Guard 16 Linford 18 Straw 20 Resist 21 Wright 22 Scots.

NEW IN THE EYE!

YES! IT'S MYSTIC MAG

looking ahead at what's in store this week.

The old crone looks into her empty crystal glass and comes up with a load of balls.

★ The Portaloo
(29 May-14 December)

Those born under the sign of the Portaloo may have high hopes for a new job but beware! Your star could be eclipsed by someone even more right-wing and unpleasant than you! Best colour is blue.

★ Arsa Major
(23 March-22 March)

Your moon is in the descendent as it has been for some time. Beware of everyone. You should not get up or even get out of bed. You must look forward to a new job, a new house and a new life of obscurity. You must also face the fact that you were a hopeless failure, unlike me.

★ The Hurdsman
(14 July-14 October)

It's time to pack it in and seek pastures new. Your moon is down the toilet, mate. You were never any good anyway with your stupid voice and silly hair. Serves you right for sucking to the Euros. Go on, scram!! Favourite city: Maastricht.

★ The Shepherd
(1 February-2 February)

If you are a shepherd, stay up in the proverbial hills away from the metaphysical wolves. Very few women can make it to the top, only *me* in fact, so sod off you silly old bag.

★ Hezza the Hunter
(30 December-31 February)

Your health is not good and I would not risk it any further. Additional stress such as standing for Leader of the Conservative party will almost certainly kill you — I hope.

★ Red Wood
(Next 100 years)

Tomorrow belongs to you! You must grasp the opportunity while you can. Nail your colours to the mast! Let loose the dogs of war! Go my beauty! Go! Exterminate! Exterminate! Exterminate!

Mystic Mag is unwell and is unable to finish her predictions this week.

THAT SOUTH AFRICAN RUGBY PRESIDENT'S SPEECH IN FULL

Mr P.J. Van der Kaffirbasher *(for it is he)*: Hets off to uz! That'll put thoze All-Blick bastards in their pleece! Ve are the gruytest in the weld! End ve alzo vould haf von all de other yars if the blicks and the communizts had not stopped uz playin!! Jeezuz Grist man, vat a team ve are! Ere ve go! Ere ve go! Ere ve go! *(He falls over as everyone leaves room)*

© The New South Africa

TV SPECIAL

HURD AND MAJOR

The Final Episode

(Major is playing banjo, and singing "When the Red, Red, Redwood comes Bob-Bob-Bobbing along." He catches fingers in strings which then break).

Major: Yow! This banjo's useless, Hurd.

Hurd: So it would appear, sir, and in that respect it shares much in common with the man playing it.

Major: I say, Hurd, what rot! Things are going dashed well.

Hurd: Indeed sir, I gather you have resigned.

Major: But only so I can get my job back, don't you see? Pretty clever wheeze, eh, Hurd? *You* wouldn't have thought that one up, even after eating all that fish, what?

Hurd: That is sadly correct, sir, and given the situation as it stands I feel the time has come to proffer my *own* resignation.

(Major drops banjo on foot)

Major: Double yow! Leaving? You? Me? What?

Hurd: Touched as I am by your loyalty and concern, sir, I must reassure you that my departure is undertaken entirely for your benefit. I feel I am a burden upon you and things would go much better for you if I were to bow out and make way for a younger man.

Major: I can't believe it, Hurd. Who will clear up all the mess I make?

Hurd: Ah! I have taken the liberty, sir, of arranging for a Mr Rifkind to take over. He is a Scottish gentleman with impeccable credentials.

Major: But hang it! I don't want a chap in a skirt, Hurd, I want you! Talk about rats leaving the sinking ship!! *(Long pause)* Not that it is sinking, mind you.

Hurd: Exactly, sir. And it will not sink a great deal better without me. As the poet puts it, *Ave atque valet.*

Major: And what's that supposed to mean when it's at home?

Hurd: It is Latin, sir. I believe it is roughly translated as "so long, sucker!"

(Hurd exits slamming door. Major picks up bagpipes and begins to play "The Rifkinds are coming awa' awa'". Bagpipes explode)

THE END

CAST IN FULL:

Douglas Hurd ..... **Stephen Fry**

Bertie Major ..... **Hugh Laurie**

Malcolm Rifkind . **Rab C. Nesbitt**

NEXT WEEK: New series of Poirot returns beginning with "Poirot in Toronto: The Strange Case of Lord Archer and the Missing Suits."

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Thursday

Today I bought a new book at Rymans to put in the names of all the people who must not get my job. The first name is obviously Mrs Thatcher who has been on television wearing a silly hat and being given some award by the Queen. She will clearly do anything to publicise her new book "Why I Hate John Major" (Collins £15.99) which I have no intention of reading, although I have marked certain passages in red biro which are not true, e.g. "I never thought Major was any good. It was not my idea to appoint him. I was forced into it by Nigel and Geoffrey."

While I am on the subject of honours, my new "Classless Honours List" is coming out tomorrow, chosen by the ordinary people of this country who have rung up the special "Honours Hotline" (0898-222-111, which is incidentally the same number as the Cones Hotline). I was very pleased to see that the pop star Cliff Richard has won a knighthood. "A brilliant move," said Mr Hanley, "this will really appeal to young voters. It could be the beginning of our recovery." Not of course that we need one, as we are doing very well and are only 58 points behind Mr Blair in the polls.

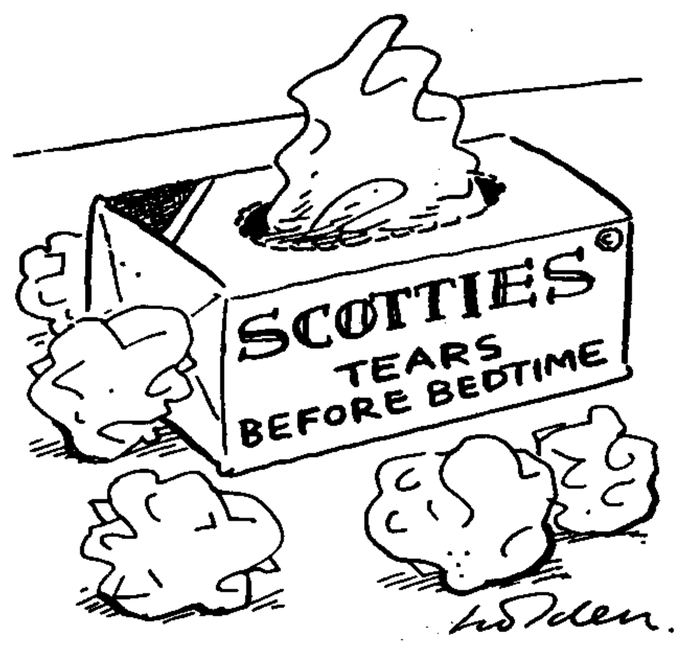
Friday

Today I put several more names in my book, including:

- Mr Heseltine, who was on the *Today* programme saying that he totally supported me and couldn't understand why the media were going on about a leadership crisis.
- Mr Portaloo, who was interviewed in the *Telegraph* saying that he totally supported me, and couldn't imagine why all the Tory MPs were going on about a leadership contest.
- Mr Lamont, who was apparently on the *Good Morning Kingston-upon-Thames Show*, saying that he could not understand why anyone supported me and that, if there was a leadership contest, he would be voting for the best man for the job — i.e. himself.

Monday

I'm afraid that a not inconsiderable number of new names will have to go into my book after the meeting I had with the new Euro-Sceptic party. These are the Conservative MPs who do not seem to know the meaning of the word loyalty. I went to see them to explain my very clear and firm policy on the Single European Currency, on which I have always been absolutely clearly and firm — i.e. that I have not yet made up my mind and I have absolutely no intention of doing so. Oh no. You can't get much clearer and firmer than that. But would you believe it, these ungrateful, disloyal and in no small measure totally rude MPs would not accept my very clear and firm view, and kept asking me to decide one way or the other. Eventually I did decide. Oh yes. I decided to leave the room. That showed them who was the leader of this party. All they could do was go off and give silly interviews to journalists about how they were going to elect a new leader. No wonder that we are doing so badly in the polls, not that we are, when I have so many MPs like this in my party. As I told Norman tonight over our usual late night, 9.30 cup of cheese-and-onion flavoured Horlicks, I sometimes think it would be better if I was the only Tory MP in the country. "Don't worry, dear," she said, "after the next election you will be." I went to sleep wondering whether I should put Norman's name in my new book.



Tuesday

I was very pleased to hear on the *Today* programme that I have at least one friend. He is called Sir Patrick Mayhew who works in Northern Ireland. He has written a letter to the paper saying that unless everyone shuts up and rallies behind me, the IRA will start letting off bombs everywhere. That should stop all the talk of a leadership battle. Not that there is any.

I am not inconsiderably incandescent with rage at the behaviour of the Shell Oil company who have done something totally unforgivable — i.e. saying one minute that they will do something, and then the next, doing a complete U-turn and deciding to do the opposite. As I said to Norman: "These people are nothing but utter wimps." "Yes," she said thoughtfully, "and you should know."

Wednesday

Mr Justice Scott is certainly a man I will soon have to have a special book for. Yet again today there is another leak criticising Mr Waldegrave for having lied to the House of Commons. If Scott is going to make a fuss about little things like that, he will probably get upset at Mr Clark, Mr Rifkind and Mr Garel-Jones as well. All they did was try and put some men in prison. Honestly!

Mr Heseltine is telling everyone that he seems to be the only member of the government who will get off "Scott free", which I suppose is his clever way of saying he is going to be the next prime minister, which he is not going to be if I have anything to do with it. I have decided that when Mr Scott's report is published, which will be on Boxing Day when there are no papers, I will have to reject his findings because he knows nothing about how politics works. I cannot think whose idea it was to give him the job in the first place.

Thursday

Today is a very historic day. When Mr Hanley came in with his crossword, I told him that I had decided to resign as leader of the Tory party. But I shall stay on as Prime Minister. It will be much easier to govern without the Conservative Party, as they have become very unpopular. This in my judgement is a very brilliant idea which will certainly put my name in the history books, as nobody has ever thought of it before. Mr Hanley asked me whether I could help him with 27 across, "giant Antipodean bird, 3 letters ending with U". "Lomu" I said, quick as a flash, to show that I have not lost touch with what is going on. Oh no.

Sunday

My historic idea has been a great success with the Cabinet. "We are all united now," said Mr Portaloo. "Everyone is delighted that you resigned." They all laughed good-naturedly. "You should have done it years ago," said Mr Heseltine. "We're all right behind you," said Mr Clarke. That is what loyalty is all about!

I then explained that there would have to be a contest for my job but only I would be standing so therefore I would win.

The Cabinet were all quite satisfied with this explanation. So much so that they all left in a hurry to go and pledge their loyalty to me from their various campaign headquarters.

Monday

I can't believe it! Mr redwood is going to stand against me. I have put him in a new book called "The Double Bastard Book". Because that is what he is. Twice as much of a bastard as all the other bastards.

Mr redwood has even been on television playing cricket. "He is trying to be like me," I said to my wife Norman. "Then he can't be very serious about winning," she replied as she wrapped the china in tissue paper and put it in the tea chest. Obviously to keep it safe from burglars.

Later on, my brother Terry rang to say that there would always be a job for me at his company. "Not as an electrician," he explained, "because you're not qualified, but I have a vacancy for a secretary to a high-flying media star who appears on radio and television and has had a successful book published and has even met Joan Collins."

Then he laughed and rang off.

Poetry Corner

Lines On The Award Of A Knighthood To Sir Clifford Richard

So. Congratulations then
Sir Cliff.
And Celebrations.

Now you are
A walking, talking,
Living Knight.

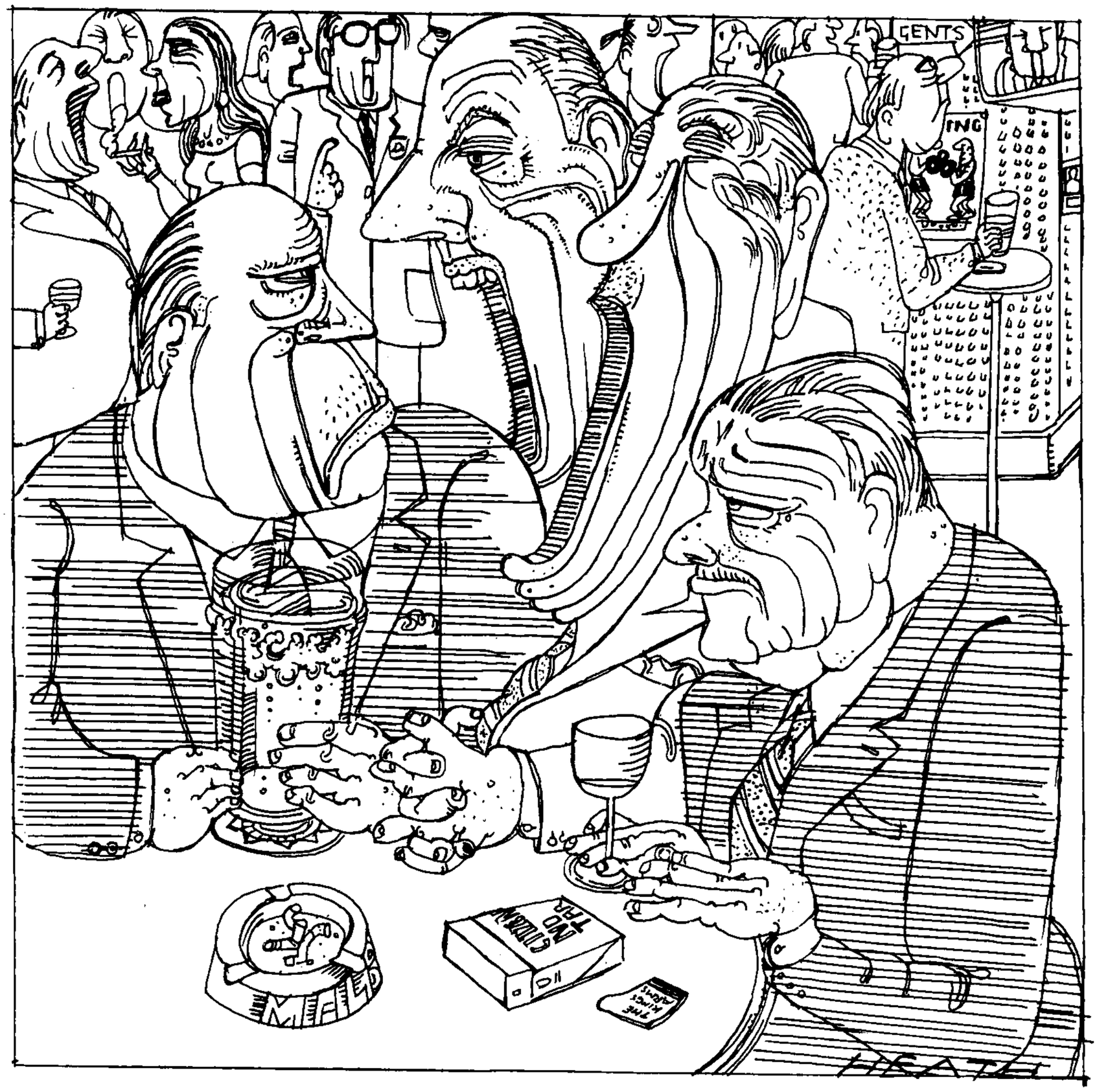
Soon you will be going on
A Summer Holiday.
No doubt!

Once again we say
Congratulations!

Because I cannot remember
Any more of your hits.

And Keith's Mum
Is in hospital.

Glenda Thribb (© All newspapers)



Great Bores Of Today.

"... you won't be able to buy a pint soon not if the EC has its way it'll be 2.8 litres and you'll have to pay ecus for it and that'll just be the start of it do you know you can't buy 6 eggs in France you have to buy 5 because the men from Brussels have said so it's lunacy isn't it? it's the officials going mad did you see that story about the farmer in Devon who wasn't allowed to make cider because his apples were the wrong shape? he went broke and shot himself and what about the British sausage? apparently it has to be between 18 and 19 centimetres long or it's reclassified as a fruit no seriously you don't believe me but it's true a carrot is now officially a dairy product I read it in the Daily Mail or was it the Sunday Telegraph? anyway English mustard is going to be a thing of the past it has to be Moutarde Regulière just like gravy that's going to be designated as jam from now on now I'm a thirty-six waist and my wife went to buy me a pair of trousers could she find them? could she? all she could get was something called M16 L-R what's that all about? it's lunacy it's those men in Brussels going mad we're on a handcart to hell and I gather they're going to paint all the postboxes yellow..."

Channel 4 Choice

EURO-CRAP

X-RATED TV show in which the outrageous Jean Paul Majeur takes an obscene look at Europe.

Tonight he trawls the single-currency bars in the hope of picking up some voters.

"Allo, my Breeteesh chums," he says. "Is this an ECU in my pocket or are you just pleased to see me?"

RATING: One to miss. Go to bed.

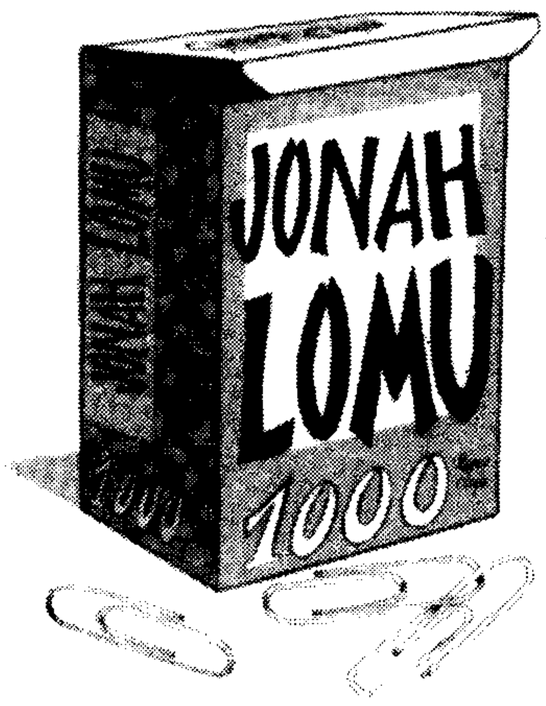
I CAN'T WAIT FOR GARY TO GO BACK ON TOUR WITH HIS BAND. HE'S LIKE A FISH OUT OF WATER HERE.
HE REALLY MISSES THE CAMARADERIE OF BEING ON THE ROAD WITH THE LADS. ENTERTAINING PEOPLE: IT'S ALL HE KNOWS HOW TO DO...
IT DRIVES ME MAD WHEN HE'S LIKE THIS WITH NOTHING TO DO- JUST MOONING AROUND THE HOUSE ALL DAY...
KNOCK KNOCK
KNOCK KNOCK
OH GROW UP, GARY. YOU BIG WALLY. YOU'RE NOT WITH YOUR ROADIE CRONIES NOW.

Only one man in Britain is capable of doing justice to the astonishing news of John Major's resignation as leader of the Tory party. *Private Eye* has invited **Mr John Cole** out of retirement to comment on this historic occasion.

HONDOOTEDLY Mostah Major Cat Among The Pigeons jonah lomu Gloves Off Throwing Down The Gauntlet slobodan milosevic Hot In Ring radovan karadiscz Lancing The Boil oscar de la renta meconopsis cambrica Put Up Or Shut Up papaverum somniferens Norman Lamont smirnoff vodka Stalking Horse paolo veronese Tory Euro-Sceptics spaghetti carbonara Political Hot Potato tomaso albinoni zippety do-dah zippety-ay che sera sera Mostal Michael Heseltine ciao ciao bambino (contd p. 94)

Advertisement

New from Gnome!



JONAH LOMU Paperclips

At last — the ultimate way to tackle those stationery problems!

As used* by Rugby's new superstar — the man they are calling the human try-machine.

Trample through your paperwork, ride roughshod through your desk melee, break through to office success!

Yes, you'll score every time with Gnome Jonah Lomu paperclips.

*probably

✷ Comes in giant size pack of 1000
Colours: ● All-Black *(not available)*
● Silver *(£445.99 + VAT)*

Apply to GNOME LOMU OFFER (formerly Gnome Rob Andrew Offer), Unit 147b, The Trading Estate, Crawley

RECORD DAMAGES FOR 'TIGHT-LIPPED' RON

WORLD OF SOCCER

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man In Number One Court With The Carton Of Rice Yoghurt And The Miniature Bottle Of McKay's Highland Breath 100% Lighter Fuel ("A Wee Sippie And Ye're Oot O'Yer Heed)

THE WORLD of soccer was rocked to its foundations yesterday when ashen-faced Ron Knee, 59, smiled for the first time in living memory.

The unique occurence took place outside the Law Courts following a week-long trial in which the Neasden supremo claimed that his reputation was "in tatters" following an interview given to the *Neasden Argus* by his estranged wife Mrs Dorothea "Dot" Knee, 58.

Dock Horror

In a 2000-word profile of soccer's Mr Mastermind, Mrs Knee called him "a quiet and considerate husband who would only have a sip of sherry at Christmas".

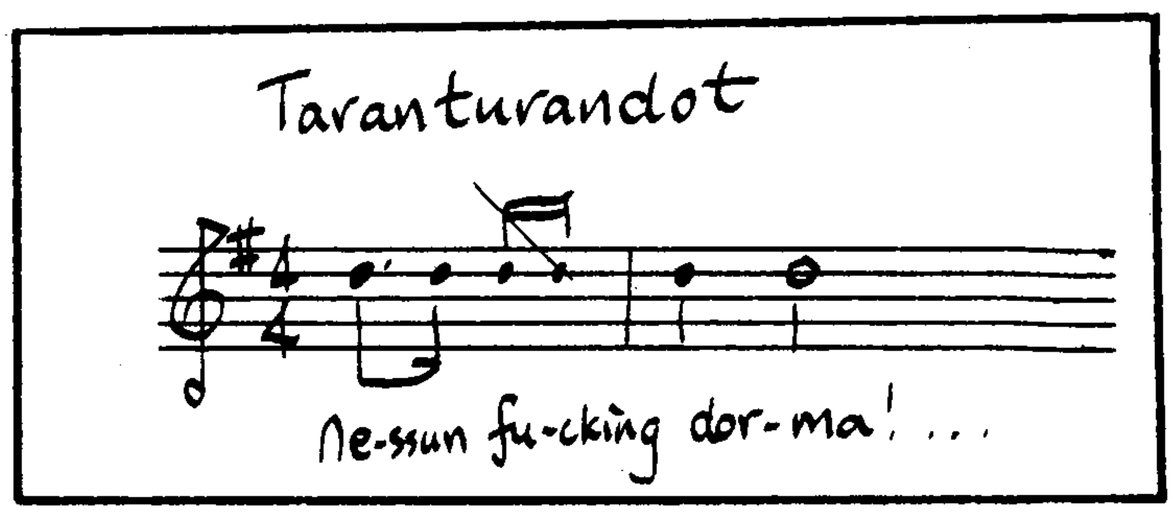
Top QC George Cardealer described the allegation as "one that has destroyed Knee's reputation as 'Neasden's Hard Man Boss' who burned the candle at both ends and was in the Boston Arms every night until closing time with a string of bimbos on his arm".

After only two minutes deliberation the jury returned with their verdict of £2 million damages.

LATE SCORE

Sealink Summer Friendly

Brooks Poly Academicals . . 3
(Pevsner [og] 1, Beuselinck 2)
Neasden 0



TONIGHT'S TV

BBC2

History - An Alternative View

A controversial new series in which lunatics are invited to talk complete rubbish about some historic event about which they are entirely wrong.

Tonight, controversial historian Alan Clark puts forward the controversial view that Britain should have sided with Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War.

"If we had had the courage to do a deal with Saddam we could have sold him even more arms than we did — thus saving a lot of British jobs, including mine."

Among the witnesses Clark calls in support of his controversial claim are Saddam Hussein and Sir Edward Heath.

Opposing him and attempting to knock down his brilliant and persuasive arguments are Bernard Manning, weathergirl Sian Lloyd and Terry Major-Ball.

© Husseytrash Enterprises.

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber

DARLING, WE'RE NOT HAPPY WITH YOUR ATTITUDE LATELY!
WHAT WAS THE FIRST THING WE TAUGHT YOU WHEN YOU JOINED THE AGENCY?
ERM..... I'M NOT SURE. MY MIND'S A BLANK!
CORRECT!
Kerber

IRANDEPENDENT

30 Rials Only

FRIDAY 30 JUNE 1995

Top Ministers in Arms Scandal

by Our Political Staff Al-Ahn Koran

The Government was reeling last night over allegations that senior ministers bought weapons from Jonathan Aitken, the discredited English arms merchant.

Said one official, Ayatollah Khomeiniac: "We bought the weapons from Singapore in good faith. We had no idea that they came from Britain. It is not our policy to deal with the regime there."

Said another top politician, Ayacantremember-The-Details: "I was not in the room when the deal was done. I've never heard of this company BMarcThatcher or of any guns we decided we could get cheap from this British johnny."

However the embarrassment to Iran's government is enormous and it seems unlikely that *(cont. p. 94)*

ON OTHER PAGES
Your Fatwas Tonight

Tehran Fashion Week – What's New!

Unfunny Cartoon by He'ath

BEST OF TV

THE DEEP BLUE SEA

A PANORAMA PROFILE

(Land Of Hope And Glory over shots of Spanish Civil War)

A. Hack *(for it is he)*: Perhaps the supreme irony of British politics today is that the great white hope of the Tory right is in fact a foreigner. Mr Miquel Xavier Don Bastardo Portaloo was born in the sleepy Spanish town of Stanmore, Middlesex, in 1961. Portaloo first sprang to national fame as the star of the famous Ribenies commercial, showing the 3-year old Portaloo scowling with the slogan "Look meaner with Ribena". At the age of 8 he attended Stanmore School for Boys, where he is still remembered.

(Film of elderly retired pedagogue)

Mr Chips *(for it is he)*: Portaloo? Portaloo? No, I don't remember anyone of that name. Tremlett on the other hand, he was a very promising boy. He became a very successful accountant, I believe.

Hack: The next peak on Portaloo's glittering upward climb was, not surprisingly, the legendary Cambridge of the early 70s.

(Black-and-white clip of students punting)

The Hon. Dominic Barkway-Sylvester: Michael was an outstanding member of his generation. We both belonged to a dining club called Restoration of the Romanovs. We all used to dress up as Cossack officers and drink lots of vodka.

(Faded snap of Portaloo in cossack costume looking worse for wear)

Hack: From his glittering Cambridge career Portaloo quickly rose to become the private detective to Cabinet minister Cecil Parkinson.

Elderly white-haired man *(possibly Parkinson)*: I well remember Michael. Whatever became of him?

Hack: From there it was but a short step to a safe Tory seat.

(Clip of polling night, 1987).

Returning Officer: I, Shaka Hislop, being the returning officer for the constituency of Harry Enfield hereby declare that the votes cast for each of the candidates was as follows:

Sutch, Screaming Lord (Monster Raving Loony)	21
Entwhistle, Deirdre (Liberal-SDP Alliance)	14,201
Spart, Dave Aloysius (Socialist Worker)	1
Dibble, Eric George (Labour)	7,302
Portaloo, Alonso Bonzo Doodah	37,812

I hereby declare that the following candidate is duly elected: Ferdinand Sancho Panza Portaloo.

Hack: Within seconds Portaloo was in the Cabinet, and his charisma and dazzling oratory quickly made him the darling of the Tory right.

(Clip of Portaloo at Tory conference)

Portaloo: I tell you, we're all sick and tired of being pushed around by those bureaucrats in Brussels.

(Standing ovation from Tory faithful for several hours)

Hack: Portaloo's bid for the Tory leadership was not long in coming, as a speech to 13 students at Portsmouth University showed.

(Crackly cassette of historic tape)

Portaloo: We all know what those foreigners are like. They cheat at exams and you have to bribe someone just to get a passport.

(Crackly cheers)

Portaloo: I do hope this is off the record.

Hack: Make no mistake, here is the most towering figure to emerge in British politics for decades.

© Panegyric (shurely 'Panorama'? Ed) Birt-Trash Productions 1995

BRILLIANT WILLS TAKES THE CAKE!

by Our Education Staff
Polly Technic (now Brooks University of Oxford)

THE HEIR to the throne has come top of the entrance exam to the exclusive, prestigious £24,000-a-day top public school St Cake's (former pupils include Stephen Fry and Radio 4's Nick Ross).

Yesterday it was announced that Prince William had beaten all-comers in what is widely accepted as the toughest academic test anywhere in the world.

Cakes Eaten

Mr Rudyard Chenevix-Kipling, the headmaster of St Cake's *(motto: Who pays, gets in)* said "There is no question of favouritism towards this particular boy. We treated him just as we would any other heir to the throne."

This is the key paper which all this year's candidates had to take:

ST CAKES ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

General Paper

1. Examine the causes of the Serbo-Croat War of 1878, with special reference to the part played by the Grand Duke of Waldegravia.
2. Clark's Theorem suggests that all solids conform to six basic laws. Name two of them and draw diagrams to illustrate their effects.
3. Solve the following equation:

$$\frac{x^3\,(b+y)^3+\sqrt{412}\;\pi}{\frac{dy}{dx}-(72^{o}\cos 4\;\infty^{n})}$$

4. Draw a map of Australia, including the major river systems, mountain ranges, climate micro-regions and the population centres of Wanga Donga, New Neasden and Barking Greer.
5. Is your name Prince William?

Time allowed: 3 hours

Candidates need answer only 1 question.

"Surely we must have a cloth? I can't sit here all day looking at those fuck-me table legs!"

WATCHDOGS SLAM CHANNEL 4 'RUBBISH'

by Our TV staff **Marcus Wordman**

TV REGULATORS hit out last night at the latest "sick and sordid spectacle" presented by Channel Four.

Their report described a middle-aged man with a large cigar and braces publicly:

- **Spewing up nonsense about artistic expression.**
- **Depositing piles of "crap" in people's homes on the subject of censorship.**
- **Using unacceptable language such as "youth culture", "valid experiment" and "Terry Christian".**

The ITC claimed that the sight of Michael Grade defending *The Word* was "one of the most unpleasant things that had ever appeared on British television". They concluded: "Michael Grade is just trying to shock us with this juvenile and obscene display of televised garbage. We know he doesn't mean it. Some people will do anything to be head of a television channel, even defending programmes which they know should not be broadcast."

Michael Grade however was unrepentant.

"There are plenty of programmes on television that are much worse than *The Word*," he said. "I can't think of any at the moment but if I do I'll commission them."

We apologise for the outrage which will have been caused by our error yesterday in captioning an early picture of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, as being Mrs Wallis Simpson.

Daily Telegraph

OPERA CHOICE

LEONARDO IN EXTREMIS

by Giovanni Rumpoli

THIS little-known opera, unperformed until now, tells the delightful story of an eccentric merchant, Don Leonardi Ingrami, and his wife Rosalinda who decide to set up an opera festival in the peaceful village of Garsingtoni.

It is a great success as rich folk come from far and near with their bottles of champagne and hampers full of Coronation chicken.

They all sing the great chorus — "Viva Fortnumi e Masoni".

Then trouble starts when angry villagers go to the Environmental Health Inspectori and demand that the opera should be stopped. They sing the chorus "Nessun Dorma" ("No one can sleep").

Poor Don Leonardi is brought before a Judge and loses the case, singing the famous aria "Tuto Perduto" ("I've lost all my money").

Fate however intervenes when the Judge has a change of heart and the villagers are sent packing. Donna Rosalinda sings the final aria "Bastardi Rusticani".

© Alexander Waugh in conjunction with Classic FM.

COURT CIRCULAR

Today's Honorary Doctorates

Cambridge University
Honorary Doctorate of Letters:
Miss Elizabeth Hurley.

Oxford University
Honorary Doctor of Philosophy:
Mr Jonah Lomu.

THE ROYAL WEDDING OF THE YEAR

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ AN EYE SOUVENIR ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

IT WAS the wedding of the century. No one has ever seen anything like it. From every corner of the globe they came — the world's most beautiful people.

Royalty, politics, the arts, showbusiness, sport — they were all represented in the midsummer sunshine outside the Neasden registry office, where the happy couple were married for the first time since last Tuesday.

The roll-call reads like a cross between the Almanac de Gotha, Debrett's and Who's Who all rolled into one.

Among the stars who were present were:

■ **Disgraced former junior minister Mr Anthony Lambton.**

■ **TV presenter Sir David Frost.**

■ **Former top model Jerry Hall.**

■ **Ex-gaolbird Taki "I once played for Greece in the Davis Cup" Takealotofcokeupthenos.**

■ **Er...**

■ **That's it.**

And that was only the cream. Also on the roll of glamour were:

● **Mr John Aspinall, the zoo-owner, accompanied by his third wife Shaka, the killer-chimpanzee.**

● **The late Lord Lucan.**

● **The late Mr George "15 Minutes" Fame.**

● **Top businessman Sir David Frost.**

● **HRH the Princess Michael of Plageria.**

● **Surprisingly few Moslems.**

That Sumptuous Goldsmith-Khan Wedding Feast Menu In Full

Fishpaste

— ❋ —

Marmite Sandwiches

— ❋ —

Roast Talbot

— ❋ —

Jam Fingers

— ❋ —

***To drink:** nothing*

NIGEL DUMPSTER'S NEW YORK DIARY

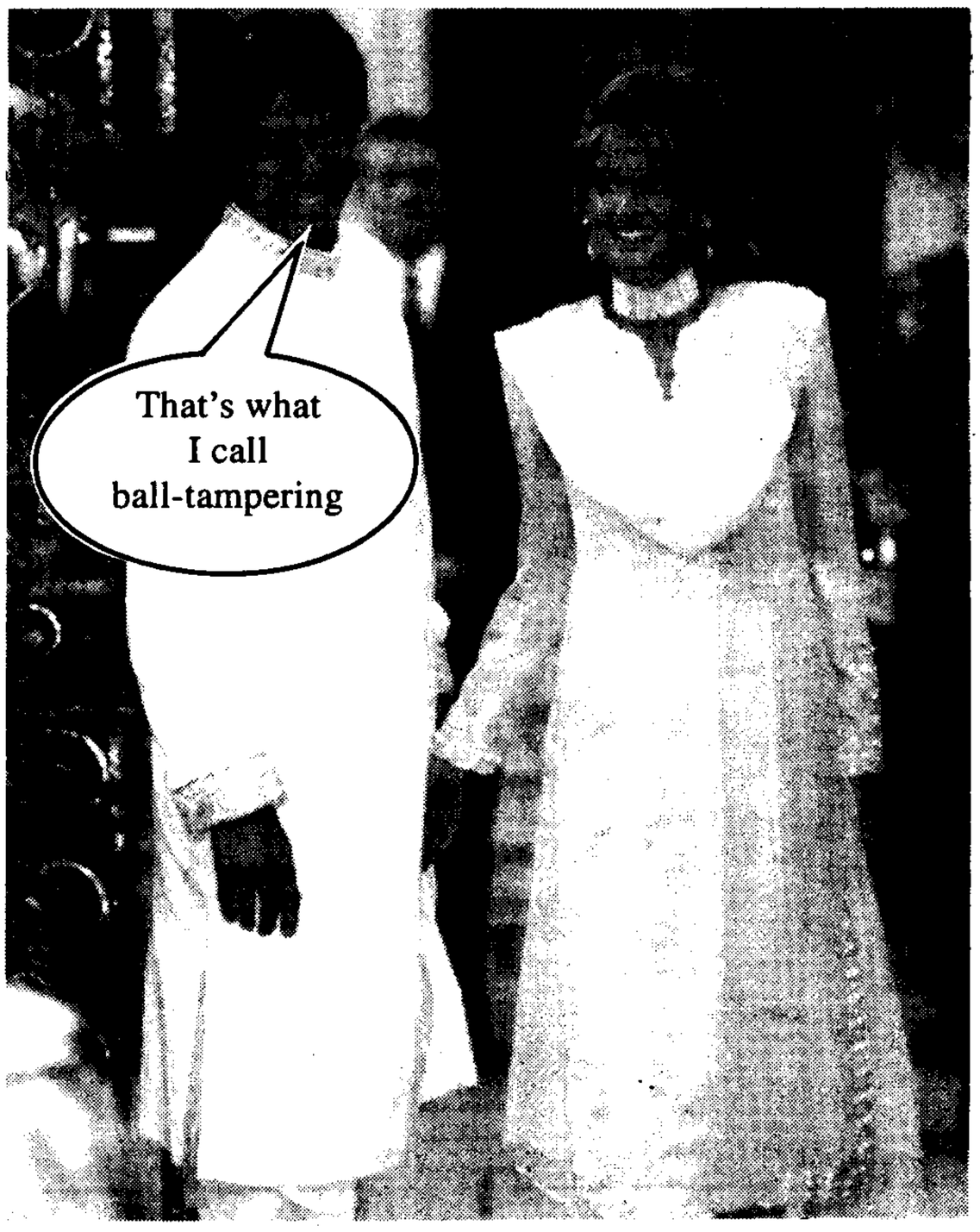
■ EVERYONE in New York is asking me why my column is coming from here instead of from the Goldsmith wedding in London.

Well it's not because I wasn't invited, I can tell you. I am a great personal friend of that wonderful philanthropist Sir James Goldsmith and his lovely wife Lady Tramps, after whom the celebrated nightclub is named. And I was invited. On the very day of the wedding, after sending only 500 faxes asking for my invitation (which had obviously been lost in the post) to be sent to me at once, I was personally begged to attend the party by none other than the bride's mother's secretary with the words: "Oh alright Pratt, you can come if you help serve the drinks."

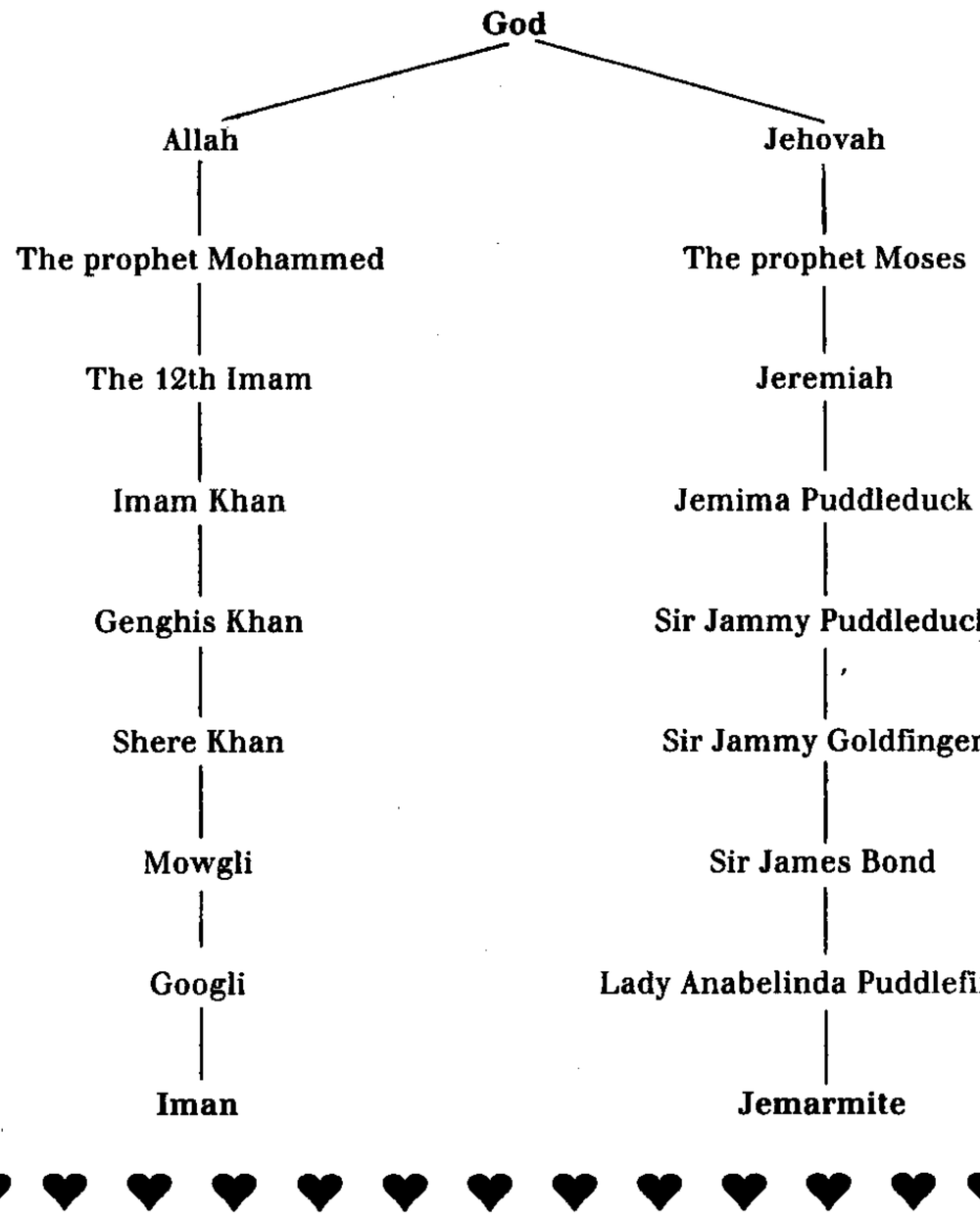
Needless to say I will not be writing about this event since it is hardly the place of a gossip columnist like myself to tell his readers about events where top people are present.

No, the *Mail* readers are much more interested in the really hot story over in America where insiders tell me that tuna sandwich heir Alvin Gruber III, who once romanced former top model Mariella Washedup, is about to *(cont. p. 94)*

A LOVELY COUPLE



HOW THEY ARE RELATED



DIARY

MARGARET THATCHER
THE GRANTHAM YEARS

We were never idle. There was always work to be done. Rotary, church and shop provided the rhythm of the day. But let no-one say we didn't know how to enjoy ourselves. We had studied the matter as a family at length, and, after careful consideration, my father left a good few minutes aside for family leisure activities each year. For five minutes every second Tuesday, we would enjoy ourselves at a session hopping on the spot, with my father shouting out instructions. But we always took care to perform this amusement in different areas of the house, lest it place undue wear and tear on the floorboards. My mother, too, though a serious woman, was full of fun. I remember her smile so well. It came just after 3.00 on June 19th, 1932, though I now forget what prompted it.

We were Methodists to our bones. The Rev Skinner was a kind and holy man, but misguided in outlook. "Blessed are the poor," he once said, "for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven". My father took umbrage at this, and with good reason. As a specialist grocer, he understood only too well the need for wealth creation. Such wishy-washy sentiments as the Rev Skinner's would provide little incentive for the less well off, making them a burden to others. The small businessman would suffer disastrously as a consequence. "We must find some way of combining Christian charity with sensible social policy," my father said. "And we can make a good start by giving the poor a short sharp shock." This was the Christian ethic by which I lived my political life. Blessed are the poor, certainly, but only when they become better off.

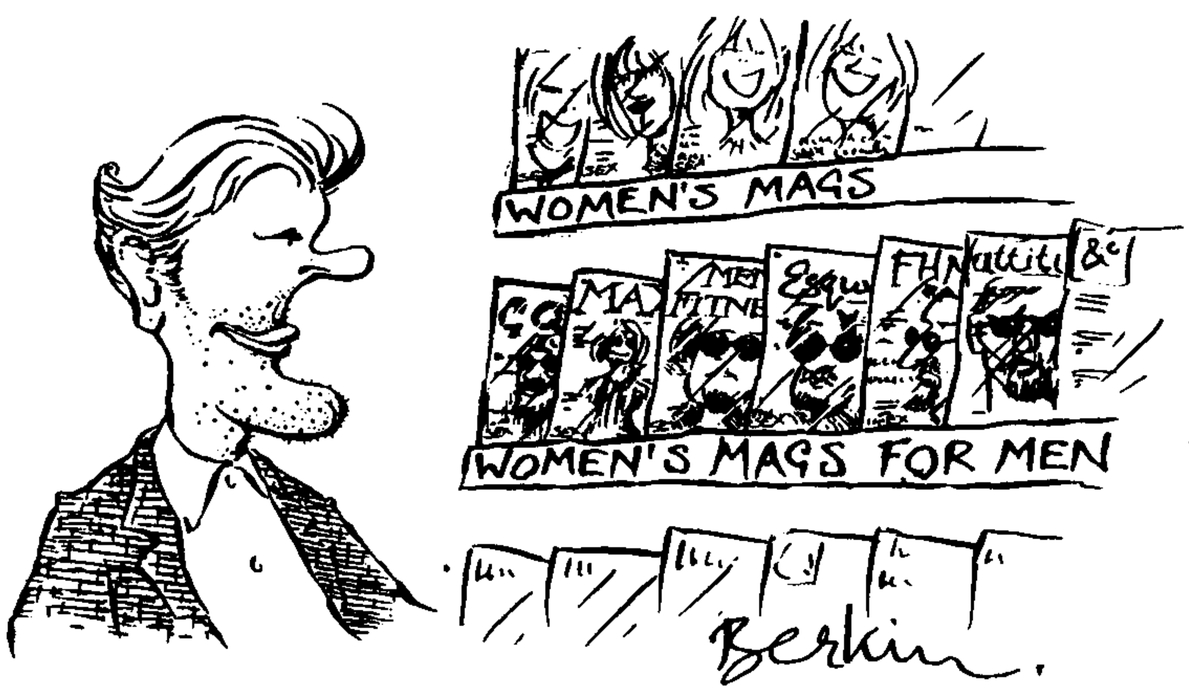
There was little time to waste on holidays. Every third year, weather permitting, we would enjoy a morning at Skegness. Up early, my father would set us to work shifting the sand from one end of the beach to the other. It was an uphill task, but we derived enormous satisfaction from it. "Your father always says there's nothing like a tidy beach," declared my mother. After the tide had come in and gone out again, we would set to work with used tissues, drying the entire beach. Four generations of the Roberts family had grown healthy spending their holidays in Skegness in this way. Yet the people of Skegness never took the trouble to thank us for it and it did not surprise me when Skegness voted in a Labour council in 1945. A sentimental attitude towards "welfare" is no substitute for a beach that's spick and span.

My father always said that one can never do without straightforward common sense in matters great as well as small. He never let anyone in his shop who had not first handed over their shoe-laces to my mother at the door. In this way he sought to put an end to petty pilfering. "No one can run far without their shoe-laces," he once said, as an elderly lady plummeted to the floor, a bag of stolen flour bursting beneath her arm. My father was a man of firm principles, and a firmer forefinger. Aged ten, I once asked him why, when serving the smoked ham, he always made a point of placing his right forefinger on the weighing scales. He explained it was to give the customers better all-round service, by helping them pay that little bit extra for quality produce. "I always say," he said, "that a finger on the scales is a penny in the till," and I have always treasured this advice.

My mother was quite a saver too. She would encourage us to take long steps whenever walking to chapel so as to save on shoe leather. She once let me in on the secret of how to save money on window cleaners. "Remove all your windows and place them in safe-storage," she advised. "Or better still, lease them out to someone else, thus ensuring an annual profit." She kept the house at North Parade immaculately clean. She achieved this by making my sister wear a feather-duster on her head, and I would be deputed to "wheelbarrow" her around the house every evening. Nowadays, television and radio provide instant entertainment, but I sometimes wonder whether it provides a fraction as much pleasure.

For all our belief in thrift and service, there was always much joy in our home. Every night, my father would let us hear a new saying that he had picked up during the day. "Watch the pennies," he would say, "and the pounds will look after themselves", or — a personal favourite of his — "Neither a borrower or a lender be." Then he would throw the topic open to discussion, and the evening would come to a happy conclusion after we had all voiced our agreement. It was from my father that I learnt the value of discussion and consensus. "There's no value in discussion and consensus," he would say. And we agreed.

My grandmother was a cheery soul. Her watchword was fair and immediate punishment for one and all. She would often drop in on our home holding an axe aloft, slamming it blade-down on the table, proclaiming: "The Devil looks after his own" or "Vengeance is Mine saith the Lord", depending on her mood. That may make my grandmother sound rather forbidding. Not at all. She was a kindly woman, often volunteering to come and take her beloved axe to a rat if one was squeaking in the corner near the biscuits. She was also an invaluable asset around the shop. Her father — my great-grandfather — had taught her how to open wooden tea-chests with her teeth. The customers admired her, often lining up and peering through the shop window when she was in residence. Many of them would bear dustbin-lids and pitchforks, just in case. She would fill the house with her laughter, especially after news had come in of a traffic accident, or a natural disaster. Above all, thrift was the quality she instilled in me. On our birthdays, she would award my sister and myself an ice lolly on a stick, but without the cold fruity bit. "Sticks on their own are much better for licking — there's years in them," she would explain. Thus our lollies would last all year, and with good, strong savings on dentists' bills to boot. A valuable lesson from my Grantham Years, and one that I have been blessed to suck on ever since.



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East Anglian Daily Times

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Health Food Business

AUTHOR Salman Rushdie, above, is 48 today.

Lancashire Evening Post

Literary Review

Witch? report

Splash
Val Corbett, Joyce Hopkirk and Eve Pollard
(Headline, £10)

WAS it one to hold the paper, one to hold the pen and Eve Pollard's broad back to write upon, do you suppose? Or something more like a ouija board arrangement? Or perhaps it was just boring old Consequences?

Is there any precedent for such a method of literary production, you wonder? Oh yes, yes, you realise, as you look at the trio's picture on the sleeve, there is, there is.

It's to be found, of course, in that instructive play *Macbeth*. Double, double, toil and trouble sort of thing; fire burn and cauldron bubble. That must have been how they did it. Splish, splosh, chuck it in, there you have it: *Splash* by Val, Joyce and Eve, Lady Bollard. Tired but happy, they turned to one another, said cool it with a baboon's blood, then the charm is firm and good, and set about organising the famous launch party.

So is the charm firm and good? Alas, no. *Splash* really does read as if it hasn't been put together by human hand.

It's a kit novel, like something you might get from MFI. Three women working in, respectively, television, magazines and newspapers, are old pals. Then comes a crisis. Ms Television has been having an affair with a married politician and it looks as though Ms Newspapers, as a professional, is going to have to make the scandal her lead story (or — mind the terminology, grandad! — "splash") next weekend, old pals or not.

Dear me. Happily, Ms Newspapers discovers that the story is not true because nobody has realised that it's actually a lesbian affair! So she doesn't have to dish the dirt after all. Meanwhile Ms Magazines worries about whether or not she's going to be able to carry her baby to term, what with the pressures of work and all. Thank heaven one's got one's friends to fall back on!

It is, you see, a paranoid tract about what a hard time working women have, full of telling observations such as that a woman editor of a newspaper can never, ever, shut her office door because the staff might think "she was doing her nails or making up her face rather than discussing private matters vital to the newspaper, such as editorial salaries, expenses and budgets, or phoning a cabinet minister". Goodness, it's tough at the top.

Plus women are still judged by their appearance and must watch their weight. If they have lunch together, they can't push the boat out, you know. They have to have a spinach salad, "followed by another dish from the appetiser menu, a small tuna collation. They would both be ravenous by mid-afternoon but their intentions, as always, were good." No wonder toasted cheese sandwiches are mentioned with such poignant regret.

Another veteran harpie, the sex specialist Celia Brayfield, has already managed to hail *Splash* as a deeply serious analysis of print journalism as "among the working environments most hostile to women". The wee difficulty with this argument is that *Splash* is just so bad, it's silly to pretend it has anything to say about anything at all.

It's main technique is to be leadenly informational in the manner beloved of all the other talent-free bestseller writers, from big game hunters to hi-tech weapon merchants. So endless dreary newspaper lore is mercilessly dished out. Apparently it's easier to get short words into headlines "so words like 'slur' were used instead of 'incriminate' or 'blacken'." Did you know that sometimes newspapers don't use all the articles they've got? You didn't? " 'It's the ones we reject that make us a good newspaper' was a quote often heard on a news editor's lips if he was worth his salt." So now you do know, don't you?

On the other hand *Splash* does perform the useful service of showing you, not even inadvertently but with positive pride, the ghastliness of the people, whether men or women, who crave the sort of power that is running a horrible newspaper. Better, the amazing contrast between the bouncy models posing as the three main characters on the cover and the picture on the sleeve of the three authors graphically shows you what damage it does to them. Back to the eye of newt and toe of frog, eh sisters?

Books & Bookmen

☐ HARPERCOLLINS has only just emerged from its fatuous sub-EST management course called "visions+values". This was of course a colossal waste of time and money and failed to address Collins's basic problem — it pays out far too much money to "celeb" authors way past their prime.

So now, the top management have had to "think" again and executive chairman and publisher Eddie "McBastard" Bell has resorted to more old-fashioned techniques: he has sent out an invitation to all his employees to sack themselves.

His letter begins by telling the staff that the publishing industry is "going through tough times". A brave employee might point out that it is only HarperCollins, not the whole industry, that is having a tough time, because Collins is so badly run, *not* because it is overstaffed. McBastard then continues by bluntly asking his staff to do the honourable thing and accept a voluntary severance package. Unsurprisingly hardly a soul has volunteered for the block.

Among those who have been unwilling to sacrifice themselves are of course McBastard himself and the individual who more than any other has destroyed one of the world's genuinely great publishing houses. He is George Craig, another fat Glaswegian with a gold chain round his neck, who presides over HarperCollins in New York. Perhaps if the ugly duo can persuade everyone else to resign their boss Rupert Murdoch may keep them on board.

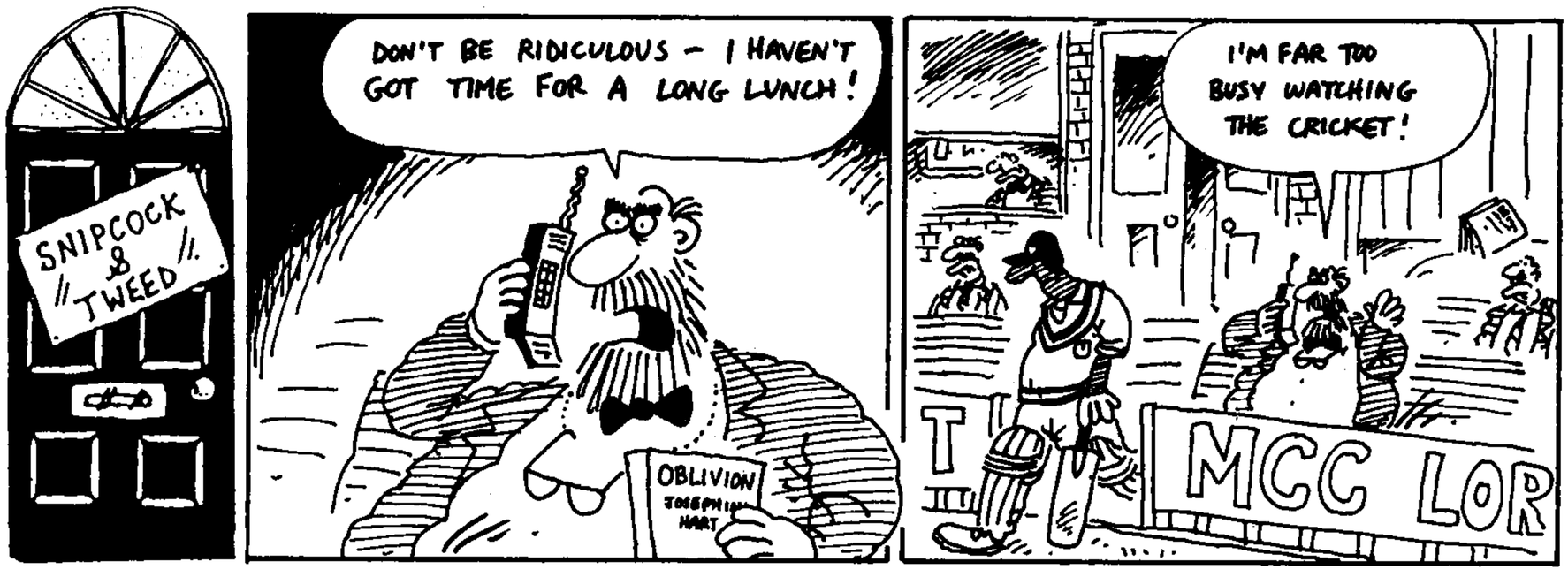
■ THIS YEAR the genuinely distinguished Hawthornden award will be presented to French pub habitué James Michie for his *Collected Poems*, published by that scourge of publishers, the late Sir Sincere Sinclair-Stevenson, the book being in danger of being reprinted for the third time.

But maybe Sincere-Stevenson's current proprietor, Reed Non-Consumer Books, will let the cloth-capped poet's lifework quietly go out of print: newish ocker boss Sandy Grant insisted that the poetry list be purged after Michie's tome was released upon an anticipatory world. It wouldn't do to let the idea catch on that serious poetry, when not written by Australians, can, well, sell.

One of the 12 purged poets, Fiona Pitt-Scumbag, believes that stabbing the poetry list in the thigh will result in the Curse of Gnome — the demise of Reed's trade list, it being sold off to EMI in the next few weeks. Three at least of the chastised poets, aided and abetted by Mark Le Fanu's Society of Authors, are suing broken Reed. La Smutbag, this week a *Sunday Times* poetess, is excitedly confiding in other poets, such as Anthony "Tweeter" Thwaite and Alan "Claret Coat" Brownjohn, that the axing of their mediocre collections will undoubtedly lead to the institutions and other corporate shareholders withdrawing their money from Reed Elsevier and the trade division being put on the block.

If so, will Orion's Anthony Cheetham (chairman Lord Cuckney; sidekick Lord Popeye) attempt to buy before he makes his pre-emptive strike at ex-employers Random House and their silly little American chief executive, Alberto Vitale? Watch this space.

'Bookworm'



footnotes

THE RT HON WILLIAM WALDEGRAVE

One of these men lied to Parliament

(can you guess which?)

HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN GOULDEN

THERE is a great deal of frenetic energy in the death agonies of the secretary of state for agriculture, Willy "Liar" Waldegrave.

Hardly a day goes by without another assertion from the minister himself, his colleagues or his influential circle of friends (which reaches all the way to Buckingham Palace) that he did not deceive parliament, as alleged by Sir Richard Scott.

Waldegrave's case is simple. The policy on exporting defence-related equipment to Iraq was not amended in any way while he was at the foreign office from 1988 to 1990, and there was therefore nothing wrong in telling the House of Commons that the same policies had been pursued since 1985.

If this is true, there is indeed a liar in high places in the foreign office. He is John Goulden, whom Waldegrave will remember as a loyal and efficient under-secretary of state at the FO.

In 1992 John Goulden was chosen to lead the foreign office delegation to the Commons select committee on the supergun scandal.

Naturally, he was most carefully briefed as to what he should say to MPs about government policy on exporting defence-related equipment to Iraq. His brief was drawn up at the FO and sent for approval to the department of trade (DTI), the ministry of defence (MoD) and, most importantly, the cabinet office. Boosted by the unanimous endorsement of all four departments, Mr Goulden confidently started his evidence to the committee thus:

"The guidelines set out by Sir Geoffrey Howe in 1985 applied until December 1988 when the third guideline was amended."

If Mr Waldegrave is right in saying the guidelines were not amended, this was quite wrong. It surely cannot be considered as anything less than a blatant and deliberate misleading of parliament.

Perhaps Mr Goulden has been disciplined. Well, er, no actually. In October 1992, nine months after he gave evidence and a few days before the collapse of the Matrix Churchill case and the setting up of the Scott inquiry, Mr Goulden got a long-awaited promotion. He became Her Majesty's ambassador in Turkey and was packed off to Ankara.

A few weeks ago, as the Waldegrave leak hit the headlines, Mr Goulden was promoted again. He is now the permanent British representative of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), which is conducting military operations in Bosnia.

The Eye asked the foreign office about Mr Goulden's evidence to the select committee. Was he right or wrong? An spokesman replied: "This matter is being investigated by the Scott inquiry and I'm afraid we have no comment on it whatsoever."

Plainly, either Mr Goulden or Mr Waldegrave misled parliament. They cannot both remain in high office, so one of them will have to go.

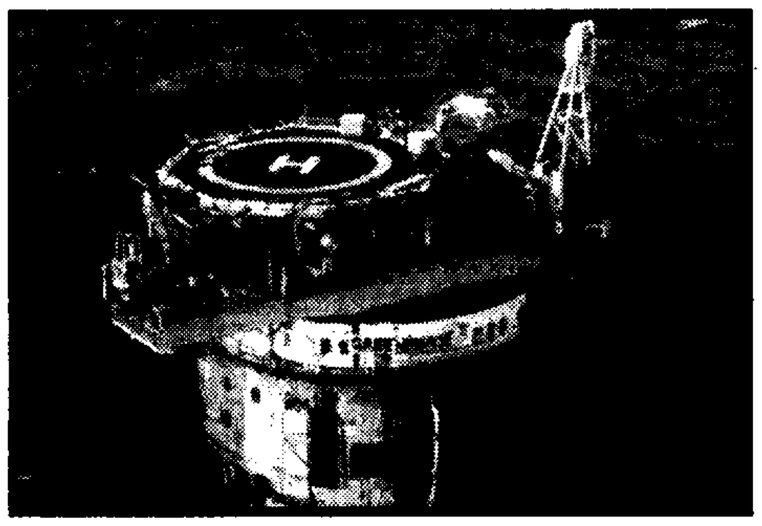
WORMS' EYE VIEW

■ A KEEN supporter of dumping oil rigs at sea is Dr Tony Rice of the Surrey-based Institute of Oceanographical Sciences. He told the Daily Telegraph on 20 June that the most likely impact of rig-dumping would be the death of some worms — equivalent in number to worms killed by the building of a hospital or road.

The Telegraph report was headed "an independent view" and Dr Rice was described as "an independent biologist", which of course he is. But what about the Institute of Oceanographic Studies?

The Eye asked if it got any money from Shell, and back came a reply listing contributors to the institute, not including Shell. The reply emphasised that "Shell UK Exploration and Production was not one of our contract customers", though Shell did subscribe to the institute's library at £200 a year, and Shell Chemicals had paid £3,500 for a water pressure test.

Nothing much, you might think. But hang on a minute. The institute is part of (and funded by) the National Environment Research Council, which last year got £6.6 million from "private sector and industry" — £139,000 of this coming directly from Shell. Another contributor (£21,000) is the UK Offshore Operators Association, one of whose members is, er, Shell. Indeed its vice-president is Mr Heinz Rothermund, managing director of Shell UK Exploration and Production.



Grid Greed

■ MANY thanks to "Ena B. Footreader" for sending in the confidential report by the Industrial Society on the views of staff at the privatised National Grid.

The overall picture from the survey is one of gloom, low morale and lack of confidence in the directors. Asked "how valued do you feel by NGC directors", most of the 2,729 people interviewed replied either "little valued" or "not valued at all". Confronted with the statement "top managers in NGC are in touch with the views and opinions of staff", every single respondent either "disagreed" or, more usually, "strongly disagreed."

None of this of course will stop the forthcoming flotation of the National Grid, which will divide the company still further between the haves and the have-nots — while filling the pockets of chairman David Jefferies and his directors with the most fantastic pay increases, share options and bonuses.

"Wild Bill" rides again

■ FOUR more facts about the post office (chief executive: "Wild" Bill Cockburn) and the Lex Service Group, on whose board sits "Wild" Bill Cockburn. Eye readers will recall the famous two-word answer of the post office when asked about any contracts between Lex and the Royal Mail: "No contracts".

1) On 1 January 1993 "Wild" Bill Cockburn joined the board of Lex.

2) On 2 March 1993, Lexlogistix, a subsidiary of the Lex group, won a keenly-contested £250,000 contract to instal computer equipment in the post office purchasing centre at Swindon.

3) In June 1993, Lex Logistics was bought up by its management and changed its name to LIS, which installed the equipment in September.

4) On 2 June 1994, LIS attended the Royal Mail's sumptuous awards ceremony at BAFTA — and won an award.

AN UNBELIEVABLE TORY

IT WAS rotten luck on Jonathan Aitken, chief secretary to the treasury, that he was on Question Time two days after being stabbed in the back by Michael Heseltine.

Until the stabbing on 13 June, Aitken had vigorously denied the charge that BMARC, his former company, had illegally supplied naval guns to Iran. Triumphantly he had quoted a secret memo on 5 April from Nicholas Williams, head of the "Scott inquiry unit" at the department of trade and industry, in which Williams denied *all official knowledge* of a BMARC contract to send guns to Iran via Singapore.

When Williams's memo was leaked to the Times, Heseltine did a little research himself. He found contemporary intelligence reports which showed quite plainly that the BMARC guns went through Singapore to Iran. He announced this to an embarrassed House of Commons on 13 June, and poor Aitken had to face David Dimbleby and the Question Time audience two days later.

Here are some of his claims, together with the facts.

FLARES AND MINESWEEPERS

CLAIM: "In those days [ie when he joined BMARC in 1988], I didn't know the arms trade really at all. I'd never been involved in the arms business."

FACTS: In 1987 Aitken, who was the local MP for Astra, which was then based at Sandwich in Kent, helped the firm get an export licence for infra-red decoy flares for Iran. The licence application was a tricky one: Iran was at war, exports of lethal equipment to Iran were banned, and the order was for flares filled with chaff to confuse radar. The flares were clearly for military use, but the application sailed through.

The minutes of Aitken's very first BMARC board meeting (on 2 November 1988) revealed: "The agent acting for Mr Aitken pulled off the Vosper contract, is ambitious and is working hard at establishing relationships." Aitken's agent was a Saudi sheikh. The contract was for minesweepers made by Vosper Thorneycroft.

THE CLUELESS DIRECTORS

CLAIM: "I don't know how I could possibly have known as a non-executive director that there was any jiggery-pokery at the Singapore end on this contract. This is not just my view... Four other directors... didn't have a clue."

FACTS: The four "clueless" directors were:

- Major General Donald Isles, formerly director of munitions, British defence staff Washington (1972-1975); and director-general of weapons for the army from 1975 to 1978. In June 1979, Isles joined BMARC, then owned by Oerlikon, as deputy managing director. Isles got the export licence for Project Lisi and was responsible for the contract. He told Newsnight on 29 March that he knew of rumours that the guns were bound for Iran.
- Chris Gumbley, chief executive of BMARC's parent company, Astra. Soon after Astra took over BMARC in 1988, Gumbley commissioned his technical director Martin Guest to find out where the guns were really going. Guest discovered they were going to Iran.
- William McNaught, BMARC's managing director after 1988. McNaught told a television company last autumn that he knew the guns were not stopping at Singapore, but had not asked what happened next.
- Stephan Kock, the Midland bank's defence consultant knew more about the export of arms than anyone else in the country.

THE DEEPLY-HELD SECRET

CLAIM: Aitken implied that none of these men knew the destination of the arms, which, he said, "was a deeply-held secret... held by the previous owners of the company, Oerlikon."

FACT: General Isles was a director of BMARC for nine years when it was owned by Oerlikon. He got the licence for the export of the guns. If there was a "deeply-held secret" about the contract the person who knew most about it was Aitken's fellow director, General Isles.

140 INTO 10 WON'T GO

CLAIM: Aitken said on *Question Time*: "The Singapore navy had plenty of patrol boats which could have taken this equipment — that's certainly what I was told."

FACT: According to the 1987/8 edition of *Jane's Fighting Ships* the Singapore navy had 12 patrol boats, with one gun per boat. The Lisi contract was for 140 guns.

Knackers Knackered (2)

■ INSPECTOR John Kenny of the Metropolitan police continues to wreck his promotion chances and annoy his superior officers by complaining about the very large numbers of police officers who take time off for sickness, or who retire early on sickness grounds, grabbing substantial pension benefits.

THIEF OF THE YARD; Tony Williams

He is rather irritated by the sudden decision of the Met not to publish sickness statistics in its annual report, and has done a little research on his own. This shows the number of police sick days doubling from 30,000 a month in 1993 to just over 60,000 last year. In 1979, days off sick in the Met were equivalent to the full-time jobs of 900 officers. Now the equivalent is 3,000 officers: more than 10 per cent of the force.

Mr Kenny raised this matter in the Met's paper The Job in 1991. He was answered by acting deputy commissioner Cooke, who pointed out that the police had set up a special occupational health service to monitor police sickness. The head of the service was a bright young accountant employed by the Met called Tony Williams. "I take the view," boomed the deputy assistant commissioner, "that Mr Kenny is not giving enough credit to Tony Williams."

The next time Mr Kenny came across Mr Williams was on 20 May when he read in his newspaper that Williams had been jailed for seven years for stealing £5 million from the Metropolitan police.

FIRE BALLS

■ **HERE'S another triumph for privatisation. For years and years, the Fire Service College in the Cotswolds ran a perfectly good public service training fire officers in crucial skills. It was publicly-owned, responsible to the home office, and it never gave anyone any trouble.**

This was obviously intolerable to the bright young privatisers swarming all over the home office, so in 1992 the college became an "agency" whose bosses could do what they liked, free from the shackles of the civil service.

The new executives devised a "business plan" which envisaged a vast income to the college from "external sources". The result was dramatic. In the first year the college lost £1.9m; in the second £2.7m; in the third £2.6m.

In normal circumstances an enterprise with such catastrophic losses would go bust; but fire officers still have to be trained and the college had to stay open. So the chief executive was sacked and replaced by Nigel Finlayson, who is making a reasonable job of "stabilising the financial situation". Mr Finlayson is, er, a civil servant from the home office.

PS: The college's losses will be met by the taxpayer.

The Royal Opera

BEGGARS' OPERA

■ THERE's been a bit of a hitch in the Royal Opera House's bid for £78.5 m Arts Council lottery money to help make its backstage facilities more agreeable by smashing up some nice old houses and shops nearby and effectively wrecking the famous Floral Hall.

The hitch is that any payment of lottery money to the Opera House may be illegal. In its directives to the Arts Council of England, the department of national heritage stresses "the need not to distribute money to an organisation over which the Arts Council of England have material influence or control".

Oh dear. The Arts Council is trustee of the Royal Opera House Land Trust. Nothing could be plainer: the Arts Council of England has "material influence or control" over the Opera House Land Trust which is asking for its money.

On 12 April John Bos, the coordinator of the Covent Garden Community Association, which opposes the new plans, wrote to heritage secretary Stephen Dorrell pointing out that the proposed lottery payment to the Opera House was in breach of his own directives. The minister promised "a substantive reply as soon as possible". Not yet though.

PS: When the Royal Fine Art Commission first saw the new plans for the Opera House in February. Former Tory cabinet minister Lord St John Fawsley wrote to the Opera House complaining about the scheme's "dominant and massive facade" and demanding a "more modest design".

No substantial change was made to the external design of the scheme, but on 22 May the commission wrote to the Opera House meekly to say how "pleased" it was to see the "changes".

FACT: Stuart Lipton, the distinguished property developer, is the project manager for the Royal Opera House development — and a prominent member of the Royal Fine Art Commission.

● SOMEONE writes to the Eye promising a "very big story" about MPs who take kickbacks from arms dealers and their middlemen. Yes, please.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183

In the City

BEFORE Sir Nicholas Lyell's attention was distracted by the Tory leadership battle and his likely demotion ahead of the Scott report's guilty verdict over Matrix-Churchill, the attorney-general was spending much time ensuring that the forthcoming annual report from the equally beleaguered Serious Farce Office (SFO) was even more anodyne than usual.

The clear Lyell policy is to ensure that no one, particularly defendants — even those against whom the SFO has obtained a result — should have grounds to complain or appeal. No triumphalism here please. Not that triumph is a word much heard in or about the Seriously Flawed Office.

Nor is it likely to become a buzz word in Elm Street after new improved SFO is launched later this year following the Davie report. This is expected to produce little other than more of the same with a heavier reliance on taking a growing number of fraud cases from provincial police forces to keep up the numbers. Local chief constables are all in favour as it saves their need to finance expensive accountancy and legal work. But the results are unlikely to do much to repair the SFO's battered image (cf Walker/Levitt/Ramsden/Blue Arrow etc).

One case that will need careful handling in the annual report is that of European Leisure which emphasised, like Levitt, that judges as much as the SFO have a lot to answer for when it comes to dealing with fraud. After a four-month trial which started with six defendants and ended with only three, directors Michael Ward and Jeremy Howarth were found guilty of a Guinness-style illegal share support operation during European Leisure's 1990 takeover of Midsummer Leisure. A third director, George Hendry, pleaded guilty.

So much for the good news. The bad news — for the taxpayer who funded the two-year SFO investigation as well as the trial — was that Ward and Howarth were merely sentenced to 220 hours' community service and ordered to pay £214,000 compensation and £40,000 towards the prosecution costs. Hendry received a conditional discharge. "Punishments" which so hardly fit the crime that the justified reaction would be, why bother!

This triumph for justice and cost effectiveness emanated from Judge Mota Singh — a judge whose reputation when it comes to fraud trials is less than enviable. With Roger Levitt the SFO allowed itself to be panicked into accepting a disastrous plea bargain resulting in Mr Justice (Lack of) Laws deciding 180 hours' community service was appropriate for a major fraud on investors. With European Leisure the derisory sentences from Mota Singh, clearly one more judge who does not take fraud seriously, were all his own work.

But now there may be another helping of bad news and red faces on the way. For the first time the SFO has appealed against the Ward/Howarth sentences as too lenient. The defendants of course are appealing against their convictions. The race is on to see whose appeal comes on first. But this seems to have been won by the defendants. So now the SFO, having done the right thing, is once again outmanoeuvred.

If the defendants win an acquittal then the SFO appeal against sentence never happens. But the risk for the SFO is that a new trial is ordered. For if there is the same outcome the new trial judge cannot give any stiffer sentence than that ruled appropriate by Mota Singh! The SFO now has to hope the convictions are confirmed so it can seek a serious sentence for a serious crime.

ONE Tory minister who is all in favour of fraudsters and others feeling the smack of firm government is the chief secretary to the treasury, Jonathan Al-Aitken bin Fahd. Before he started wielding the scimitar of truth against those in the media who probe his business activities, the youthful Aitken was not averse to doing a little probing himself as illustrated by his largely forgotten 1967 book, *The Young Meteors*.

A curious chapter amid those on such business, political and showbiz figures as Gerald Ronson, Jim Slater, Peter Walker and Pete Townshend was one largely devoted to the sleazy world of whips and canes under the title "Sex and the London scene". This largely consists of detailing how "the prostitutes' exploitation of masochism and sadism is the greatest growth industry on the sexual side of the London scene".

Aitken investigated this phenomenon with enthusiasm. His informants included "Miss L. Ash, Miss Birchwood, Miss Kane, Miss Cord, Sheila the Strong Armed Swede, Miss Swish and Madame Sade. "All men are equal under the whip, dear", Aitken was told by one of his research assistants, whose clients included MPs.

Aitken and his readers were taught the tools of the SM trade. "An extensive armoury of weapons including a heavy and light cane, a leather belt, a cat o'nine tails, a birch and a fly whisk type whip... fourteen different punitive utensils... a vicious bull whip with a lash over four feet long".

After extensive investigations Aitken discovered that this love of being beaten was "a vice peculiar to Englishmen". The reason? "The public schools give many men a taste for corporal punishment which continues throughout life".

The future minister, however, learned there was less enthusiasm for being on the receiving end. "There is a certain amount of reverse trade between sadists who like to administer beatings and girls who are prepared to receive them but this is fairly limited. Of my eleven interviewees only two would accept this kind of work."

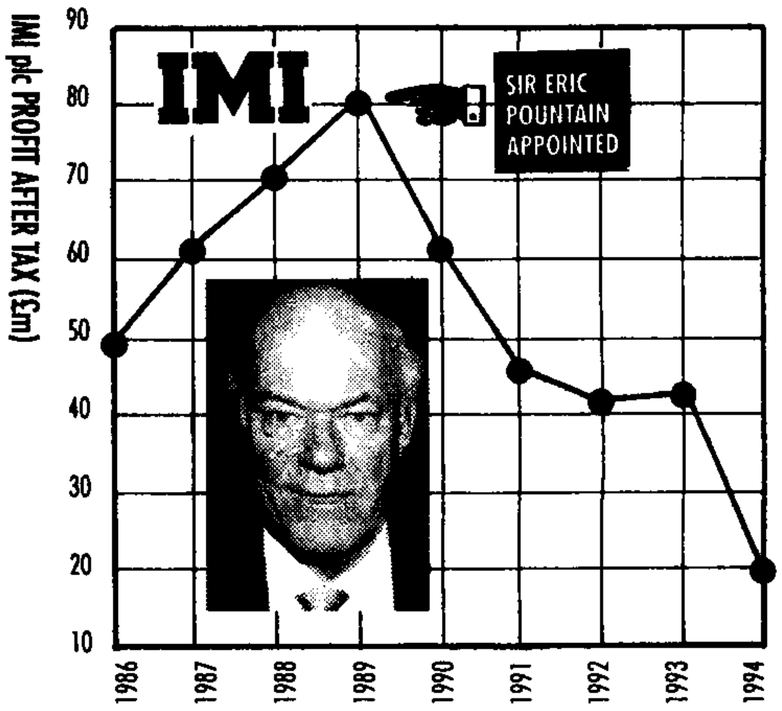
Young Jonathan also gleaned one other valuable piece of information from Miss Whiplash and her sisters. "The one snag in writing about prostitutes and their work is that one's information is derived from people to whom the truth is far from sacred." A point of which Sunday newspapers equally are only too well aware.

THE row over the PowerGen directors' share options trough is unlikely to assist the little loved chief executive Ed Wallis in his bid for recognition from a grateful nation.

Given John Major's view about directors' perks, the £890,000 realised from share options by Wallis with more to come is hardly the stuff of which knighthoods are made. Nor is it likely to help Wallis in cultivating Norma Major despite his generosity to good causes.

Meanwhile PowerGen shareholders would do well to query the board at the forthcoming annual meeting about the libel action against the *Observer* over the allegations of directors using inside information when deciding when to cash in their options last year. If the company is suing on behalf of the directors, what arrangements are being made for Wallis and friends to contribute? If the directors are not paying, will they be collecting from any award or settlement? Or is the libel action yet another PowerGen one-way bet?

British Management Part 20.
SIR ERIC POUNTAIN. Former Chairman Tarmac plc, Chairman Beattie plc, Director United Newspapers, Chairman of technology giant IMI plc since 1989.



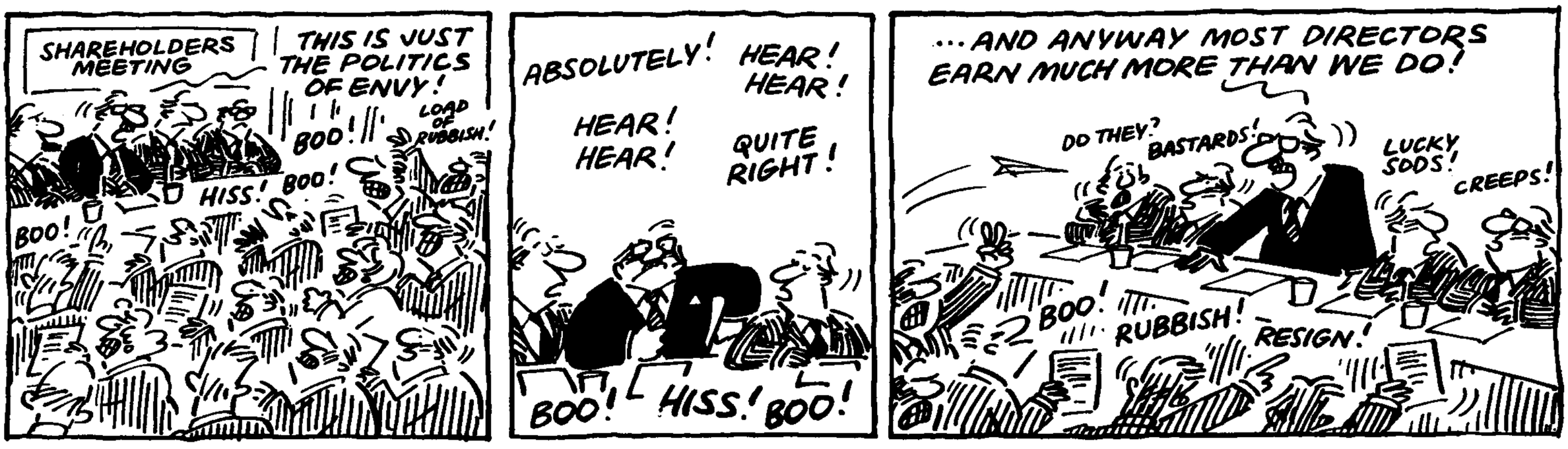
IMI plc Profit after tax			
1986	£49.0m	1990	£63.4m
1987	£61.1m	1991	£40m
1988	£71.9m	1992	£44m
1989	£81.2m	1993	£45m
		1994	£19m

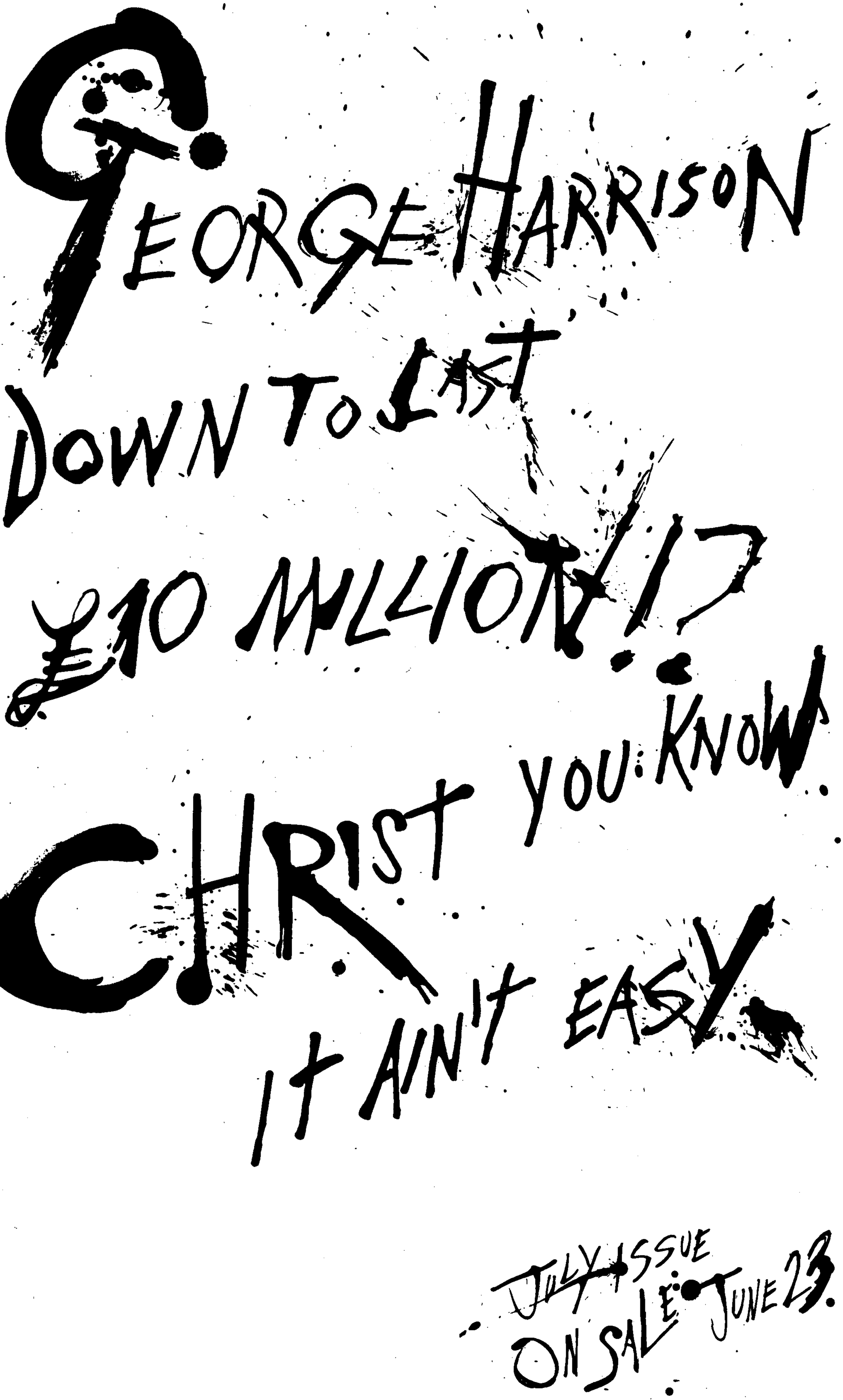
WHILE waiting for the appeal from Guinness One due in November former stockbroker Anthony Parnes is back in business. Now clearly eager to shed his former City nickname of "The Animal", a less abrasive Parnes is to be found running Allied International Investors from an office off Park Lane. His co-directors are his live-in business partner Aida Dellal-Hersham and one David Hyman. Parnes, who describes himself as "an investor", was eager to emphasise the hardship he had suffered when news came of the home office decision to send the Guinness Four's case back to the court of appeal. However, his 50th birthday earlier this month was celebrated in sumptuous style at the Dellal-Hersham/Parnes residence in St John's Wood. Among the 100-plus guests was Parnes's old City friend and fellow Guinness defendant (retired, mad) Roger Seelig. However, there were no sighting of his former clients Gerald Ronson and Jack Lyons. Less surprising was the absence of Ernest Saunders. But then maybe with the appeal coming up he had a recurrence of Alzheimers' disease and forgot.

'Slicker'

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE

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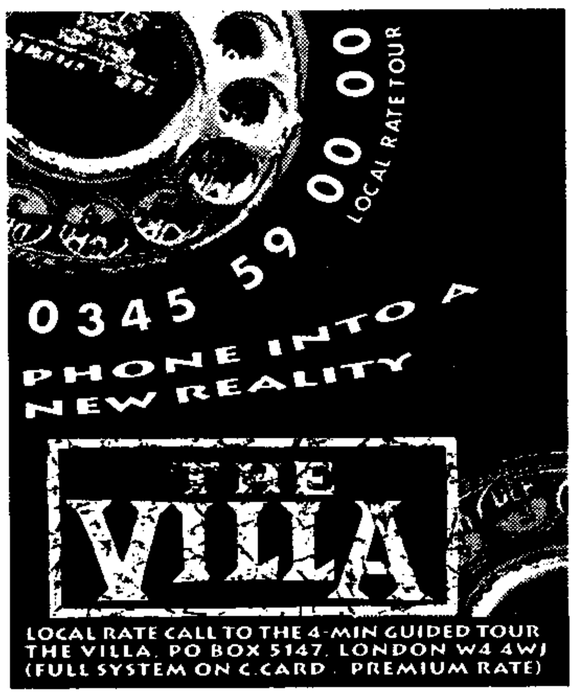
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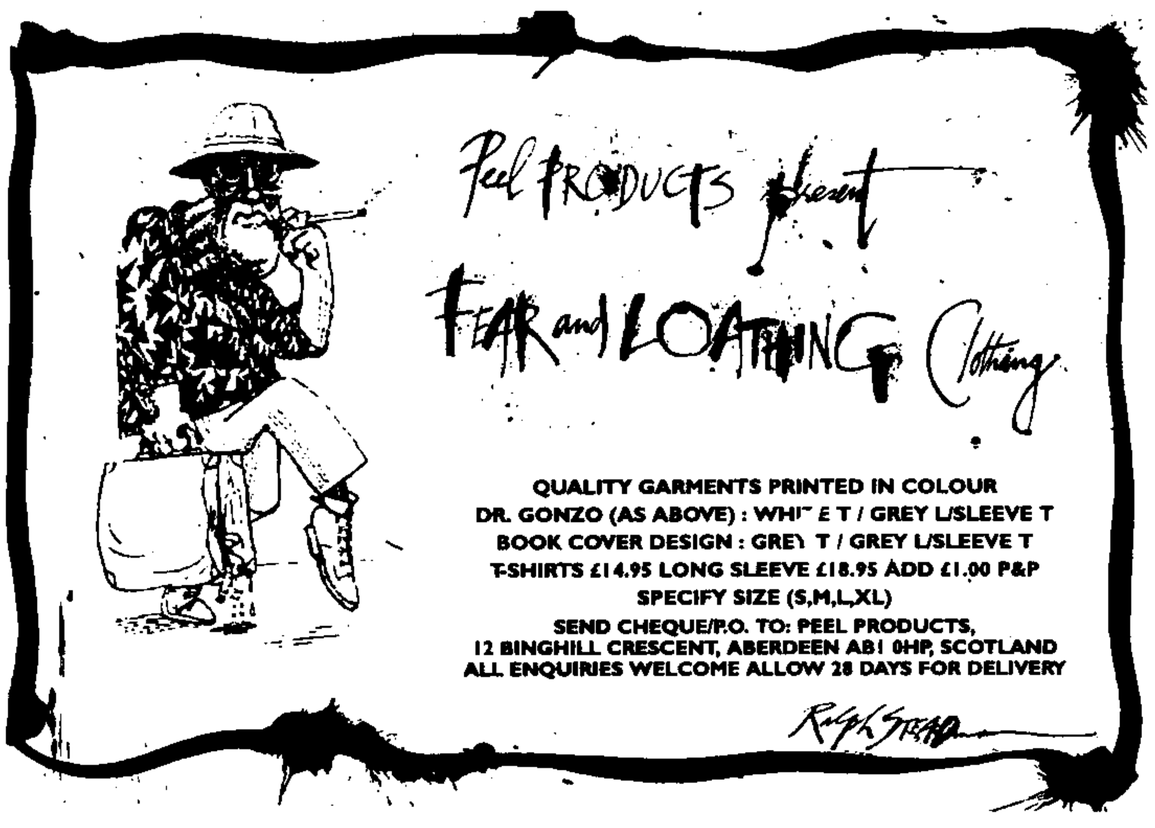
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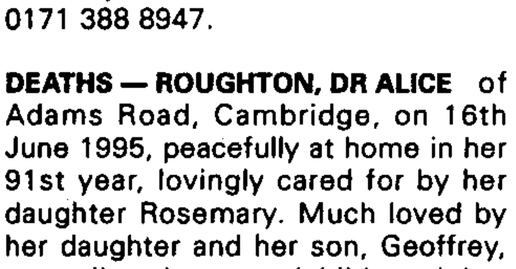

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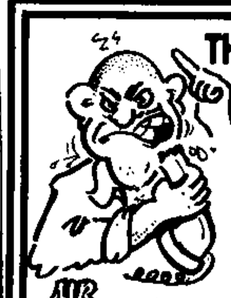

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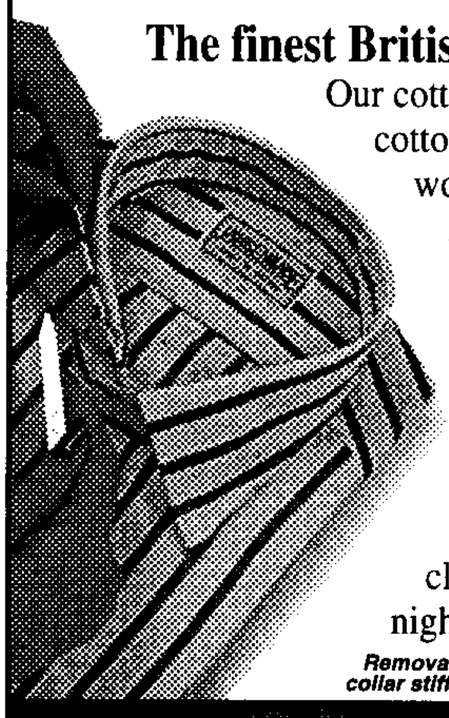

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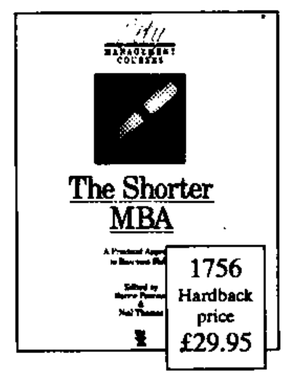

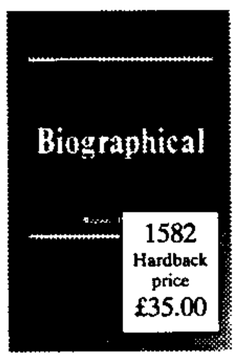

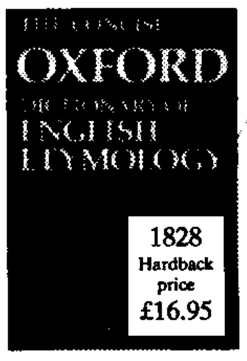

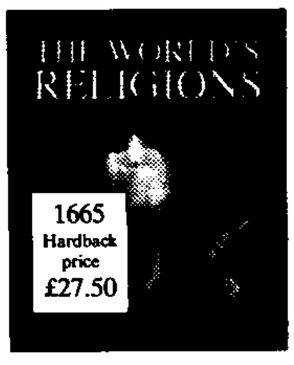

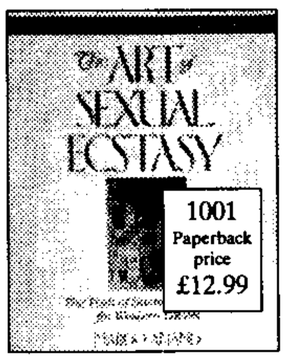

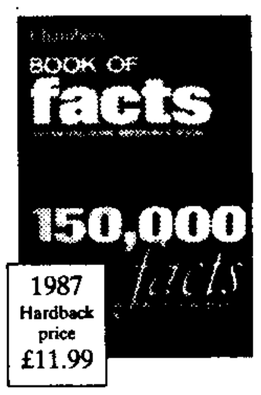

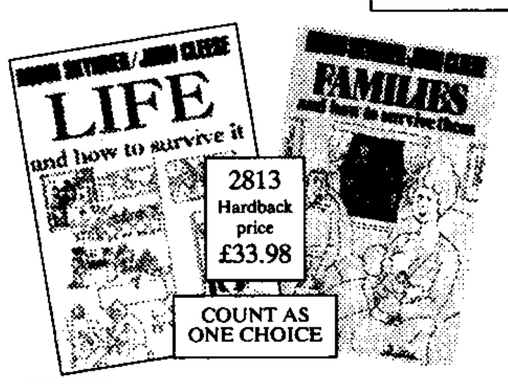

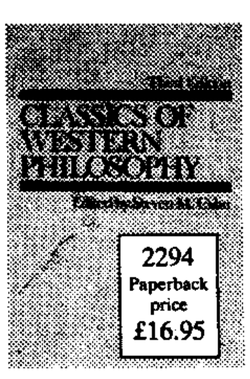

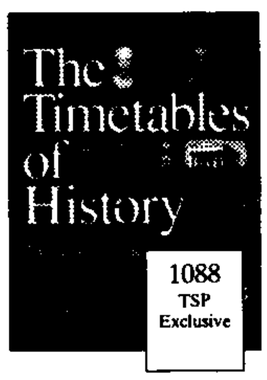

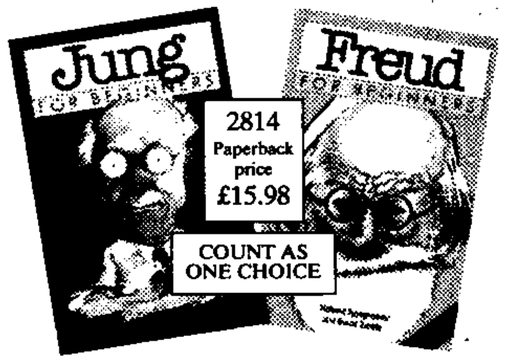

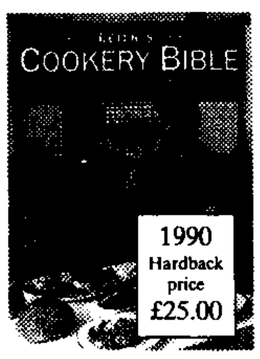

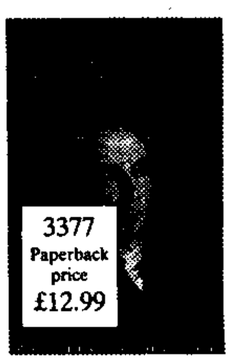

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